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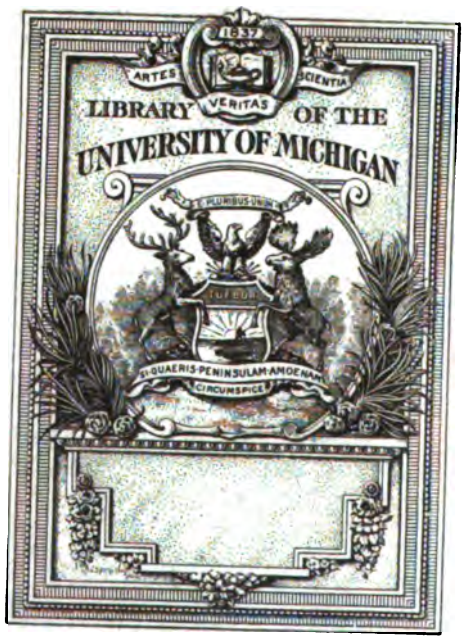
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"Some great cause, God's new Messiah"

MESSIAH PULPIT

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SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

VOL. III. OCTOBER 7, 1898 No. 1.

WORRY

GEO. H. ELLIS
141 FRANKLIN STREET, BOSTON
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1898

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NOTE.

I have not written a sermon for years, and do not expect to write one for a good many years more. This was written and preached in Boston nineteen years ago. Though more than once reprinted, it is out of print again. The demand for it still continuing, I have decided that its lesson is a good one with which to begin the present year. So I have preached it on my opening Sunday morning.

M. J. S.

NEW YORK, Oct. 2, 1898.

WORRY.

"Take no thought for the morrow. . . . Behold the fowls of the air. . . . Consider the lilies of the field."— MATT. vi. 34, 26, 28.

TAKE no thought? But we must. The only man who approaches literalness in his obedience to this injunction is the tramp. And, if we all obeyed it, we should all become tramps first, and starve to death afterwards. The wild man of the tropics, who needs no more substantial shelter than a roof of palm-leaves, into whose hand the bread-fruit falls, and who finds his drink in the milk of the cocoanut,— he, if he is willing to stay a wild man forever,— can afford to take this text for his motto. But the gulf of separation between him and the modern world — a gulf that it has taken ages of toil to cross — has been bridged by thought,— by anxious, laborious thought,— and by thought alone. Measure, if you can, the distance between the savage who can only count the number of his fingers and a Newton calculating the return of a comet or the pathway of a star. Every acre of forest cleared and turned into a farm, a garden, or a park, every road laid out through the woods, every white-winged ship that flies across the sea, every roof-sheltered fireside which is the centre of a home, every line of rail that trembles beneath its thunderous trains, every wire that quivers with the electric thrill, every factory that whirs and hums with its maze of machinery, every picture and statue, every essay, every poem, every treatise on philosophy or science, — all the mighty total that constitutes modern civilization is only a crystallization of the upheaving, seething thought of

man. They are the result, not of thought only, but of laborious, weary, anxious, prolonged thought,— of thought that reached beyond the day, and took in the morrow and the coming ages. Every garden bloomed, every ship sailed, every home arose, every railroad was built, every telegraph line was strung, every factory hummed, every work of art stood out in beauty, every poem was sung and every drama enacted, every science was outlined, first in some man's brain. Thought has done it all.

The world is what it is of good to-day because it has disregarded the letter of our text. Advice that is good for birds and lilies will hardly do for man. The bird finds food in every open field and a home in every tree. His feathery costume is always of the finest material and handsomest cut. His children leap out of their nests into the best of bird education and the best of forest society; and they find a living independence in nature-given beak and wings; and, when the hard winter threatens, they have only to rise in the air, and let the winds bear them away to a sunnier home. As for the lily, its lot is even easier still. Its mother earth supports it, the sun clothes it in beauty, the dews give it drink, and the winds rock it to sleep and soothe it with their lullabies. The birds and the lilies have no wants that Nature does not supply. But man is thrown upon a world where — until he has conquered it, and made it his servant — every power that confronts him is an enemy. And thought is the only force that can conquer. And he has in him a thousand hungers and a thousand possibilities of growth that original nature will never satisfy. Thought, then, is his helmet, shield, and sword, that enable him to conquer his conditions and his own higher self.

Take no thought, then, shall we say? Nay, rather, take all thought. Think ever more highly, more deeply, more broadly. Think! and evermore think! Can I look a successful business man in the face, and tell him to "take no thought for the morrow"? Will he not smile in response at

my simplicity, and tell me I am advising him to put his books into the hands of a receiver, and go into voluntary bankruptcy? It is just by taking thought for to-morrow, by calculating the markets of next week or next year, that he keeps his place on the street, surrounds his family with comfort, and educates his children. And never in all the world was this so true as it is to-day. However we may clothe the fact in courtesies or at times forget it altogether, it is nevertheless true that all of us are engaged in a struggle for life. The law of competition holds us in its resistless grasp.

The minister in the pulpit may tell his hearers to "take no thought for the morrow"; but they know perfectly well that he himself only keeps his position by disregarding his own advice. The minister who in these days takes no anxious thought will soon find the people taking another minister. The man who has made a great invention, and after that takes no more thought, will soon find his machine displaced and antiquated by the work of some one who has kept on taking thought. Life has become a race-course or a rowing match. The utmost care must be taken in preparation. Every muscle must be trained to its best. Every accident must be foreseen and provided against. A keen eye and a quick hand must take advantage of every opportunity. If not, the goal is never won and the prize is never grasped.

But are these words of Jesus, then, only pretty sayings, poetry, or moonshine? Perfect candor and sincerity compel me to say that I do not think we can model our lives on them as they stand. In Palestine, amid the circumstances in which Jesus gave them utterance, they had a kind of application we cannot give them to-day. The wants of the people were few and simple, and their supply easy. But, even after granting so much, it seems to me plain that Jesus here pictures to himself an ideal world, untouched by life's hard realities, where only the lily-like fragrance of a good life and the bird-song of joyful trust should be needful. In

the actual world the fragrance and the song are the exhalation and outburst of thought and toil.

And yet there is a message here for us; and it contains a lesson of the very highest importance, one that touches our prosperity and our peace. There is a vast difference between wise foresight, the careful doing of all you can to control both present and coming events, and that worry and fret that so often usurp its place. And I want, right here, to warn you all against making what I have so far said any excuse for the worry which is legitimate care,— the nourishing milk of life — turned sour. Take thought for your life and take thought for the morrow, you must and ought. And yet this needful duty is, I fear, quite generally made the excuse for a kind and degree of carefulness which is evil, always evil, and only evil.

"Worry," perhaps you say, "yes, undoubtedly troublesome. But is not it rather a small thing to direct a whole sermon against?" It may possibly be a little like levelling a columbiad at a cloud of mosquitoes. But its importance can hardly be overrated. If we measure things by their influence on human welfare, we must put worry very near the front rank of evils; for perhaps there is nothing in American life that is a greater destroyer of happiness. Let us look at it, then, in some of its most commonplace and practical aspects.

And, at the very outset, let us get rid of one common delusion concerning it; for in this delusion, perhaps, is its principal stronghold and defence. We all hate worry and fret and fuss *in other people*, and can see, with a great deal of plainness, that it is almost always inexcusable. But each one of us thinks,— if it is not thus put into words,— "It is all very well to talk philosophically, and give good advice; but nobody else in the world was ever so bothered as *I* am. There's something peculiar about *my* children. They are *so* thoughtless: they do slam the doors so. They have such heedless ways of turning the house bottom side

up. They tear their clothes out faster than I can buy them. And, then, nobody was ever so bothered by ignorant, upstart servants." Or the men say: "Nobody on the street can be so bothered about his business as I am. The stocks had to go down just because I had invested a little. Just as all my notes are maturing, a creditor I had depended on has failed. I want a little money, and the rate of interest has gone up. When I get some to loan, it will doubtless go down again." And so on in all the walks of life. And I, for one, am not going to deny that even ministers are just as human in this direction as other people are. But, really, friends, when we think or speak after this fashion, are we not somewhat ridiculously conceited? We must not think that we are so important that the universe takes special pains to bother and fret us. Nothing whatever has happened to us in these respects that has not already happened to thousands of very common people. Such things are happening all the time. They are the common incidents of life. Servants, children, business,— these are all the time bothering people who will be bothered. Our only defence is in ourselves. It is a question as to whether we will master and calmly control our circumstances, or whether we will let them master, worry, and flurry us. There is no special virtue in our being calm and cool and sunny when there is nothing to make us anything else. Anybody can keep from being seasick — on land.

Recognizing the fact, then, that these disturbances and temptations to worry come to us all, and must come so long as we live and try to do anything, what are we going to do about it? What does a wise general do in ordering a campaign? In the first place, he takes thought, a great deal of careful thought, until he has foreseen and provided for all possible contingencies. He does all he can in the way of preparation. He sees that his troops are in order, that all their wants are supplied; and, then, with the best knowledge he can get of the enemy, he arranges them for

the battle. But, when the battle begins, he takes his stand calmly on some post of outlook, and becomes the executive will of every division, brigade, and regiment. He does not fume and worry and fuss, losing his head, his balance, in his own anxiety. This is just what he does not do. However great the confusion about him, he is calm, with an eye for everything and the word of command ready for every emergency. His lieutenants and orderlies may get excited; but he *must* not. All worry is just so much waste of force and source of danger. Thus ought we. Do all we can to control that which can be controlled, to arrange that which can be arranged, to provide for all that can be foreseen, and then keep cool, and be ready to take advantage of any favorable turn.

The principle lies just here. Care is the friction of life. And friction,— what is that? In the answer to this question you will see it all. If there were no such thing as friction, nothing could ever be done. It is the friction between your boot and the sidewalk that enables you to walk. When the sidewalk is all ice, there is not friction enough, and you can hardly stand or move: the boot does not stick where it is set. Were there no friction, a train of cars could not move. The wheel must stick to the rail with a certain force. But after a rain or when the rails are greased, there is not friction enough. The wheels spin on their axles, but take no hold on the rails so as to drag the train. Thought, care, is the friction of life. Wise foresight and provision are the friction necessary to progress; but worry is the friction that does nothing but wear out the machinery. It is sand in the watch or a pebble in one's shoe: it disarranges and impedes. Nobody ever got on without thought; and nobody ever worried without being hindered.

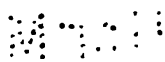
Then, again, worry is utterly irrational. It is not the supremacy of reason, but a contradiction of it. Its most striking exhibitions are to be found among the creatures we call irrational. Take, for example, a chained dog trying to

get free. For an hour at a time he will leap and struggle against his chain. Take a lion in his cage, walking up and down by the hour, and fretting against the iron bars. Take a bird beating itself against a closed window in the endeavor to escape. In all these cases, it is wasting time and wearing out strength in fretting at the inevitable. It is a puny force trying to get the better of the universe. If the dog knew any better, he would examine his chain; and, if he found he could not break it, he would reserve his strength for something he could do when the time came. There are two things you should never worry about. One is the thing you can help; and the other is the thing you can't help.

If you can help a thing, do not worry, but go to work and help it. If you cannot help it, do not worry, but wait, and preserve your strength for something you can do. There is no use in beating yourself against the bars of the universe. This is to be a child, and cry because it rains or because it does not snow when your new sled comes home. To fret against the weather, for instance, is to think your convenience ought to interfere with and change an adamantine chain of cause and effect that stretches from eternity to eternity. To annihilate one drop of moisture or one ray of light in the heavens to-day would be as much a miracle as to pitch the Catskills into the Hudson by a wish. The wise man tries to get on the side of the movements and forces of the world, but never wastes his strength in beating against the barriers of the inevitable. Jesus says that with all one's thought he cannot add one single cubit to his stature. You would say it was pure childishness for a short man to fret because he could not be taller. If by eating and training and good physical care he cannot grow taller, there is no use in worrying about it. But there is just as much use, and no more childishness, in worrying about this as there is in fretting about other inevitable things. And we generally worry about things that no worry can help.

Notice, again, that the most of life's worry is about purely imaginary evils. I do not mean to say that an imaginary evil is not the cause of the most real suffering; for it is just our imaginative faculty that is for us the source of our acutest suffering, and also of our keenest delights. But most people are helpless in the hands of their imaginations, forgetting that this faculty, as well as any other, can be trained, and made a servant instead of a master. As you look back over life, you will bear me witness that I speak only the simple truth when I say that you have suffered more from things that never happened than from all your actual ills. As we say, and say truly, "Worry kills more people than work." We are always crossing bridges we never come to and climbing mountains we never reach. Just as in our night dreams we face unreal dangers, are pursued by unreal wild beasts, fall over phantom precipices, and are struck down by unreal weapons, so in our day dreams as well we are overwhelmed with imaginary evils that are as unreal as the shadow of a cloud.

How many business men are there that have already piled upon their shoulders, and are now stooping under, loads that they expect to have to carry during the coming year! The materials in their business are going up, competition is increasing, the margin of profits is growing narrower or is likely to or may possibly. If such a possible thing should happen, some other awful thing will, probably. Perhaps the boy has just entered college or gone into business, and the father already carries a load of possible difficulties. Or perhaps he is looking ahead, stinting himself and his family now, making his face anxious and his hair thin with the fear that his old age will not be properly provided for. He has got enough now, and business is fairly prosperous; but, if something should happen, he might come to want or his family die in poverty. Now, as you well know, I think all these things should be looked after. Thought and care are needful; but worry and fret only



make more probable the very things you wish to guard against.

How many mothers carry similar burdens! It is enough to take care of a child when it is really ill, or to watch over it when a limb has been broken. But hundreds of mothers go through it all, over and over again, in anticipation, while all the time the children are well. If a boy goes out for a base-ball match or a game of foot-ball, she spends the whole afternoon seeing him brought home with a sprained ankle, a broken arm, or one eye missing. If he goes out for a sail, instead of thinking what a capital time he is having, with a fine breeze and dancing waves, she spends the hours dreaming of him overboard, with dripping hair, and making food for sea-monsters. Or, if he is ever so good a boy, instead of rejoicing in the fact, and taking hope and heart, she is always afraid that he is in bad company, and will some day break her heart.

Now in all these things, friends, what shall we do? Is it not really best to do all we can calmly, to plan as well and wisely as we can, and then to hope for the best, and only take the worst when it really comes? I have about made up my mind that, since I have not got to die but once, instead of making it my life-work, I am going to "live while I do live,"—in the best sense,— and then die all at once, and have it done with. It is not worth while to die by piecemeal, spreading it out over years, and making all life dark with its shadows. Let us pick up and carry bravely the burdens that duty lays in our path; but let us not be cheated out of the best of our life by bugbear phantoms that tell us that something dreadful is always about to happen. Let it happen first; and then we will take care of it afterwards.

And all this means, to put it in a nutshell, what I have told you before, but wish to tell you again, that the wise way is to *live by the day*. To-morrow is all a delusion. There is no to-morrow. When the next sun rises, we shall say

"*this* morning." And so on every day of our life. All our happiness comes to-day; and it is only to-day's burden that we shall ever have to bear. When, then, you find your imagination fooling you and saying, "To-morrow you will have a crushing load to carry: you had better sit down gloomy and brooding, and think it over," then stand up in your might, and tell your imagination it is a liar. And if, on the other hand, it says, "Do not stop for the simple, common pleasures of to-day, but sit down and muse and dream of what a splendid time you will have next week," again rise up, and tell it that it lies. This kind of foreboding fancy that pictures future sorrows and future joys, and diverts us for the present, is the greatest happiness-killer on the face of the earth.

We go through life as some tourists go through Europe,—so anxious to see the next sight, the next cathedral, the next picture, the next mountain peak, that we never stop to fill our sense with the beauty of the present one. Along all our pathways sweet flowers are blossoming, if we will only stop to pluck them and smell their fragrance. In every meadow birds are warbling, calling to their mates, and soaring into the blue, if we will only stop our grumbling long enough to hear them.

Our wives are sweet enough, our husbands kind enough, our children good and promising enough, to make us happy, if only we will try to help. There are bitter ingredients now and then in the cup of life; but it, to me, is so wondrous, so mysterious, so delicious a draught that, whatever be at the bottom, I thank God for it every day. Nobody but ourselves can poison it; and we shall find in it enough that is sweet and sparkling if only with our own hands we do not make it bitter with the wormwood of gratuitous worry.

During the coming year, then, let us do as well as we can; and, when we have done that, let us learn that we have a right to trust. Whatever happens to us, we can compel it to be the servant of our highest life.

Can we do better than to take as our motto the thought embodied in this verse? —

"Build a little fence of trust
Around to-day:
Fill the space with loving deeds,
And therein stay.
Look not o'er the sheltering bars
Upon to-morrow:
God will help thee bear what comes
Of joy or sorrow."

Unitarian Catechism

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

Price, Paper, per Copy, ...	*20 cents.*
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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

VOL. III. OCTOBER 14, 1898. NO. 2.

The Church's Claim on the Individual

GEO. H. ELLIS
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THE CHURCH'S CLAIM ON THE INDIVIDUAL.

As a text, I will take the words to be found in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, the twelfth chapter and twentieth verse,—"But now are they many members, yet but one body."

Any human interest which is very wide-spread, which takes hold of life and has in it any permanency, always tends to embody itself in some sort of organization or institution. This for the natural reason that thus the individual growth is better attained, mutual help is rendered, and the cause itself is furthered in its general acceptance on the part of mankind.

These organizations are never perfect; for the simple reason that there exist no perfect people to make them of. They are never any too wise. They do not always follow the best methods of reaching the ends they would attain; and sometimes they may even make the serious mistake of not seeking the truest end. But the organization, imperfect as it is, is better than none; and the work that is to be carried out is more likely to be reached through this imperfect organization than as though it were left to the general and indefinite interest of unorganized individuals.

And, of course, again, these institutions or organizations change from age to age. The beliefs, the purposes, vary. One organization dies: another springs up in its place, and carries on the work. This, of course, if the interest is a permanent interest and if it takes strong hold of the human heart.

As an illustration of this principle, I need only point out the commonplace facts that we have art societies, we have philosophical societies, we have musical associations, we have literary bodies. All these great interests of the world incarnate themselves naturally, necessarily. We have government. We have all these things put into some form of institution. People naturally and of necessity associate themselves.

Now religion,— I am speaking of religion in general, not of any particular form of it at present,— religion is the oldest, the most wide-spread, the most permanent interest of mankind. No tribe of men has yet been discovered, however ignorant, brutal, degraded, that has not been religious according to its conception of what religion means. All over the world this religion has spread. It has increased in intensity and power as the ages have advanced; and to-day there is no one interest that so touches, so moves the human heart, that has so much to do with human life, with human welfare, as has religion.

It has organized itself in many different ways. I only need to suggest India, China, Greece, Rome, to show you in what various ways the religious instinct, the religious hope of man, has expressed itself; but for the purpose we have in view this morning we are to talk about religion as organized into the Church. But the Church, again, has not always been the same. It has instituted itself in different ways among different peoples, in different ages, in different grades of human culture. Its creeds have not always been the same, its rituals and services have not continued unchanged. Its ideals, its conception of God, man, duty, destiny,— all these change and advance as humanity grows. But the Church, as the organization of religious thought and hope and life, abides in the midst of all these changes.

The Church as an institution has been no more nearly perfect than has government, or art, or science, or literature, for the simple reason that the Church has always, in any

particular place, been made out of the kind of people that were there,— not always wise, not always unselfish, not always gentle, not always true, not always refined and spiritual. But it is safe to say that the people who have been in any particular church have been better than they would have been but for the organization, and that the organization itself approaches perfection as rapidly as individual characteristics permit.

I wish then, this morning, to speak with you very familiarly and simply for a little while concerning the claim which the Church, as the organized religious life of the time, has upon the individual man or woman.

At the outset of our religious year it seems to me that it is altogether fitting that we should reconsider some of these things about which we are, perhaps, all the more ignorant and thoughtless because they are so familiar and so commonplace; that we should compel ourselves to a fresh look in the face of these great facts and truths, and see what is our relation toward them and what our relation toward them ought to be.

There is a feeling on the part of a great many people at the present time that religion belongs essentially to the past, that the Church as an institution is in danger gradually of disappearing and giving place to other agencies for the advancement and uplifting of mankind. There are a great many people who agree with the French philosopher and scientist Comte in holding that religion in all its forms is identical with superstition, and that, as a man rises above the mists and sees clearly, he outgrows and leaves behind all these things which were the accompaniment of the childhood stage of his career.

I wish to show, if I can, how far this is from the truth, to let you share with me the conviction, which is the result of all the thought and study I have ever been able to devote to the subject, that religion is not only the grandest interest of man, but the most universal and the most permanent;

that it cannot, by any possibility, ever be outgrown or left behind. I have not time to go into an elaborate discussion of this truth this morning. I rather assume it for the time being, while I reach, perhaps, the same end in a somewhat indirect way.

Let me, then, in the first place, call your attention to the fact that the Church, as the embodiment of the best religious life of the time, stands for that thing which, in the highest and most distinctive sense, is manly, is womanly, instead of its being an accompaniment of men's childhood, something to be outgrown. As we leave behind childish things, we only approximate somewhat more closely to a conception of what the genuine religious life is as we climb up into the essentials of our manhood.

Indeed, a man is not a man, a woman is not a woman, until he or she has come to recognize and live in that part of his nature or her nature with which religion essentially and necessarily deals.

Let us see. I am not a man because I have a body. I share that with my poor relations, the animals; and, in many respects, some of them have better bodies than I have. Perhaps mine is better adapted to my general course of life; but there are animals who are stronger, fleeter, more enduring, more graceful, than the average man. I am not a man, then, because I have a body. I am not a man, again, because I think and reason. Animals think; within certain narrow limits they reason. I must find something else, then, if I am to distinguish myself from the animals, and set myself apart in a class labelled human. I am not a man, either, by virtue of the fact that I love, that I have an affectional nature, that I am capable of self-sacrifice under the impulse of my love. Animals love. Jesus has said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friend." But animals and birds will lay down their lives for their companions or for their young. I must find some other reason even than this for calling myself a man.

I do not think that I have a right to call myself a man merely because I have some recognition of the principles of right and wrong. I think you may discover the rudiments of moral perception and moral feeling in the lower animals. We do indeed have this in a higher and more distinctive way than that which is manifested on the part of many of the forms of life below us; but, before we climb up into that which the animals do not share with us, we must recognize the fact that we are souls, that we are spiritual beings, that we are the children of God, sons and daughters of the Almighty, that we can come into conscious relationship with him, that we can co-operate with him in carrying out his divine purposes for the education and development of the race. We must come up into the realm of the ideal, where we dream, where we are conscious of the imperfection of our present attainment, where we have visions of things finer and higher and better than have ever been realized.

Up in here is where the man, the woman, is found, and up in here is the field and realm of the religious life; and it is around these sentiments, reverences, worships, loves, hopes, consecrations, that the Church organizes itself.

The Church, then, has a claim on you by as much as and in so far as you are men and women; for the Church is peculiarly and emphatically the organization of that which constitutes manhood and womanhood.

In the second place the Church has a claim upon you because it stands for — shall I say righteousness? It is a pity that so many good words get spoiled, that so many terms are battered and defaced coins. The word "righteousness" has come popularly to stand for something not belonging to every human life. It has a pietistic, a sanctimonious flavor that makes me sometimes hesitate to use it. It is something apart from the ordinary human life. Let me, then, use a word which is identical in meaning, and which will perhaps make that meaning a little clearer.

The Church stands for "rightness" in every department of human life; and it is the only organization on the face of the earth that peculiarly and always does stand for that when it is true to itself.

What do I mean by "rightness"? I think it is too common for people to suppose that the laws of God are something imposed upon us in some arbitrary fashion,—that they are statutes enacted. Nothing of the kind. Let us see what the laws of God are. The real laws of God are the constituent conditions of life. They constitute things what they are. They are the conditions of existence itself.

Let me see if I can illustrate and make it very clear. I define an island as a body of land entirely surrounded by water. Now this is not an arbitrary thing. God did not say that an island had got to be that. An island is that,—simply the recognition of a fact. If it is a body of land not entirely surrounded by water, then it is not an island, that is all. I say a promontory is a high point of land extending into the sea. If it is a low point of land, why then it is not a promontory. It may be a point or a cape; but it is not a promontory.

Now these conditions, these laws of God are simply those by virtue of which a thing is what it is, that is all,—nothing arbitrary about it. A circle is a line every point of which is equidistant from a point within which is called the centre. Break the conditions of a circle, and you have no circle, that is all.

And so in regard to anything which is divine. I am a man. How? Why? By virtue of my living within the limits of those laws and conditions which constitute me a man. If I break those, depart from them, just in so far I cease to be a man. This is inevitable. It is not because God said it should be so; and it was. It is part of the nature of things.

So rightness means nothing more nor less than getting into accord with the eternal, changeless, necessary laws of

God. For example, if I obey all the laws of my body, the conditions of perfect health are attained; and, so far as I am a physical being, I am perfect. If I come up into the mental range and keep my mind clear, unbiassed, unprejudiced for the reception of truth, come into right relation with facts as they really exist, why, then, I am right mentally. If, in the affectional nature, I love that which is lovely, that which ought to be loved, if I perceive clearly the beautiful, and am attracted towards the beautiful, then in my affectional nature I am right, righteous. If my conscience perceives clearly justice and truth and tenderness and helpfulness, those qualities which I recognize as the divinest because the most human, then my moral nature is right. If my spiritual nature is in filial, loyal relation to God, bowing in that humility which lifts me to the level of the divine, then I am right as a child of God, rightly related to my Father.

Then extend this idea of rightness into all our human relations,— husband rightly related to the wife, and wife rightly related to the husband; parents and children rightly related; neighbors rightly related; friends rightly related; employer and employed in right relations; business men related righteously, rightly, to their fellows; right as a citizen of the city, right as a citizen of the State, right in my relation to the country; and then all of us in the country rightly related to other peoples, to mankind,— do you not see that, just in so far as we can approximate this rightness, disease, wrong of every kind, unhappiness, war, injustice, cruelty,— everything which blots and disfigures the world,— is eliminated, and the perfect comes?

The one aim, then, of the religious life to-day, intelligently conceived, is rightness, righteousness. This is that for which the Church, the true Church, stands. And remember that this, the Church, is the only organization, the only institution on the face of the earth, that does stand just for this. And is not this the grandest aim of human life? Is

not this that which has a right to claim your living allegiance and service? Are you not under the highest of all conceivable obligations to do what you can to help the divine development of the race, and so to leave behind its evils, its burdens, its crimes?

Has not the Church, then, a right to claim that, if you do not join it, you shall at least do the very best you can to live out the kind of life for which it stands? This is not a service to a particular organization, but a service to God and your fellow-men, and service to the highest and best thing in yourself.

Another thing the Church stands for. I think I have had occasion once before, at least in this place, to touch upon this point. The Church stands for worship; and worship means a good deal more than it is generally supposed to mean. Worship may or may not mean a bended knee, a closed eye; it may or may not mean the reading of the Bible, the singing of a hymn, the engaging in prayer; it may or may not mean attendance at any particular place called a house of worship. I believe that all these things can be of the greatest conceivable help; but they are not of themselves and necessarily worship, and they may all exist, and worship be absent. These things are only as conduits, pipes, stop-cocks connected with the city's water supply, to use an illustration. You can have all the machinery and no water, or you can go out into the woods and dip the water up in the hollow of your hand or in a leaf from a neighboring tree without any of the ordinary machinery at all. The essential thing is the water. The mechanism is good, if it makes it convenient for you to have the water supplied: the mechanism is a mischief, if it makes you think you have the supply when you have not.

Worship, then,— what is it? It is the upward look of a man in admiration. It is connected with that ideal of which I spoke a moment ago,— indeed, finds its life in the ideal. It is the recognition of something better than we have yet

grasped; and it is the aspiration towards that something better. That is what worship means. And do you not see that this is absolutely essential to growth, to progress on the part of man? An artist who thinks he can paint a perfect picture is not the artist who is increasing in artistic power. The man who thinks he knows it all is very apt to be a good ways off from those that we think of as wise. The man who thinks he is good enough, probably does not agree with the opinion of his neighbors concerning him.

It is the man who recognizes that, however fine his attainment may be in any direction, there is always something higher and finer beyond, and who is looking up and on towards it, reaching out, if he may by gazing upon the face of the glory be ultimately transformed into its likeness.

And right in here is a hint for those who are troubled by the fact of the existence of sin. Do you know, I am glad that sin exists. I am glad that this is a sinful race, as we call it. If it were not, what would it mean? It would mean that we had got through. There would be no further progress for us, no growth any more. If you can find a race of beings who are not conscious of any imperfection, then you will find a race, whether it is on earth or in heaven, that has got through. The recognition of imperfection is the very first condition of progress, the natural ground of all growth. So that, instead of being discouraged by it, we ought to be grateful that we are permitted to see our defects and at the same time permitted to see an ideal of something higher and finer and sweeter that it is possible for us to attain.

The Church stands for all of this, then,—for worship, for the recognition of the ideal, for an estimate of our imperfections, and for holding up the image of that which is perfect as the standard towards which we are ever to strive. The Church, then, here as no other organization on the face of the earth, stands for human hope, stands for growth, stands for the unending advance of the race. Do you not

see, then, that this worship is no narrow, no petty thing? It means to some shallow thinkers a form on Sunday, or perhaps something a little humiliating and hardly manly. Worship is the only manly attitude. It is the attitude of a man with his face turned towards heaven instead of one who grovels and is content merely to look to the dust.

There is one other thing that the Church stands for which I must suggest. It stands for preparation for another life. It seems to me that we are passing through at the present time a stage of thought and feeling in regard to this subject which is unnatural, unhealthy, unintelligent, and which cannot last. It is, perhaps, natural as the result of the old-time ideas on the subject. We used to be taught that the object of living was to get ourselves into a saved condition: that meant passing through some kind of experience here, sacramental or otherwise, whatever the particular form of the church dogma might be, that should fit us to go into one place and keep out of another by and by. Well, now, whatever else most people have come to believe or ceased to believe, they no longer hold that the other place exists. There are very few people, even in the old churches, who believe in what we popularly mean by hell any longer; and it is perhaps natural at first that people should get into a state of mind that regards any preparation for a changed life beyond death to be unnecessary. If there is no hell, why worry about it, why try to keep out of it?

I had a friend in Boston once say to me, "Mr. Savage, in the passing away of the old beliefs, has not the reason for church-going also passed away?" And yet he was an intelligent and successful business man, and asked a question like that. It seemed to me not over-thoughtful. Are we happy here, and do we find a present heaven because we are in some particular place? Are we unhappy because we are in some other kind of a place? Do you not see how utterly shallow this whole conception is? Heaven and hell are essential conditions of the soul. Our unhappiness de-

pends upon our relation to the great facts of the universe. Heaven is only that kind of adjustment of all our faculties and powers to the place, the conditions, where we are, so that harmony can exist and the forces of the universe play upon our keys so as to produce that music which we call happiness.

It is not a matter of place, hell or heaven. If we only analyze ourselves just a little, in some superficial sort of way, and remember that, when we pass through the fact of death, we are still alive, and that, when we wake up there, we have left behind money-making and the ordinary amusements of the world,— fashion, dress, the common rounds of society,— that we have left behind most of the things which the great majority of people seem to absorb themselves in, we shall find ourselves somewhat lost and lonely.

In other words, unless we find out those parts of ourselves which are likely to survive the experience of death and cultivate those, we are in danger of waking up by and by, and finding that we have made some terrible mistakes.

A boy graduates from Harvard. Does it not make any difference whether he is fit to graduate, whether he has trained his faculties and powers so he can grapple with the facts of life, merely because a man is not going to stand at the gate with a bludgeon, and fall upon him with some terrible punishment which may reach even unto death unless he is prepared. If that is not true, is all the reason for his studying and developing himself taken away?

Because we are not going to be thrust down into a place of torment, therefore is there no use of our developing our spiritual nature, those faculties and powers which fit us for the kind of life to which we are to be introduced by death? It seems to me, friends, that there is just as much need of being prepared now as there ever was; and the Church stands for the cultivation of these spiritual faculties, these essentially manly qualities of our nature that fit us to be at home with the spiritual beings, the sons and daughters of

God, that we may find in the larger ranges of the universal life when we have stepped out of this little narrow presence-chamber that we call the earth.

What is the result, then, practically? It seems to me it is this. I put it briefly under two points.

First, it is your duty,— not because I say it, but because it is,— it is your duty to think earnestly, and make up your minds as to what Church, in its principles, its purposes, its ideas, its methods, best represents your own earnest conviction, what one, in your judgment, is the most likely to be of service in helping on the world, without any regard to what other people do.

This, it seems to me, is your clear duty. Think, look over the situation intelligently and earnestly, make up your mind. If it is not this church, then you have no right to come here. If it is this church, no matter how you were trained, you have no right to go anywhere else. And the decision should turn not on such superficial, frivolous questions as are frequently permitted to decide. You know as well as I do that thousands of people, if they go to church at all, go merely because they like to hear a particular minister who preaches there or because they are attracted by the music, the choir, or because the service is pleasant to them, or because a friend already goes there, and they have been invited to go, or because the church is conveniently located, and it is easier for them to go there when they feel a little lazy on Sunday morning than somewhere else, or they fancy it may be for their business advantage to get into acquaintance and association with certain business interests represented in that church, or because they think the social swim is that way. For any one of these utterly petty, unworthy reasons do people make up their minds.

The Church is not a minister. It is not a lecture association. The Church is a divine organization for divine ends; and you are not to come merely because you are entertained

or pleased. You are to come, if you come at all, because you are engaged in the most serious and noble business of life, — helping to cultivate the highest and finest things in yourself and in your neighbors and friends, and helping to support the truth of God that has in it the promise of a nobler life for the world. That is what you are to come to church for, if you come at all.

In the second place, when you have made up your mind what Church you ought to attend, then become a part of that organization. Eye or hand or foot or pulse, deed, thought, emotion,— take your place in it. Get the added strength that comes from the association. Give the added strength that should follow your becoming a part of it; and then hold yourself, your time, your thought, your money, your influence, your whole life, subject to the divine call, and count it your chiefest glory that you are permitted to join with God in helping on the great end that the ages are reaching out after.

By as much, then, as you care to live in the higher realms of your nature which constitute you man or woman, by as much as you care for righteousness and the elimination of the darkness and sorrow and evil of the world, by as much as you care for that uplook and aspiration which is the impulse and promise and growth of the world, by as much as you care when the day of graduation comes from this earth life to be ready for the next step up and on, by so much the Church has a right to make its claim upon you for help, for co-operation, for consecrated service.

Father, we give ourselves to Thee anew. We are Thine. We are glad that we are Thine. We thank Thee for the privilege of knowing that we are Thine, for the blessedness of being able to do some little thing to help our fellow-men and forward Thy work. Amen.

UNITARIAN CATECHISM

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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CAN WE MAKE TROUBLE SERVE US?

As a text, I take from the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans a part of the twenty-eighth verse: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

Paul believed that in earnest. Do we? He did not say, you will note, that all things *are* good; but he said that he knew all things worked together *for* good to a certain class of people, — not to everybody, — to them that love God. Undoubtedly, Paul did not have that conception of the method by which the world is governed which we hold to-day. He probably thought of it as an arbitrary government, purely according to the chosen will of God. And he goes on to say, in this place, that certain people, who are called, shall be chosen, selected, and all things work together for good to them. God sees to it that nothing harms them. He does not promise any such freedom from the evil results of suffering to anybody else.

Paul, I say, believed this. Do we believe it in any sense? Have we, in our changed conception of the universe, any ground for holding a similar faith? To answer this question, if I may, is my present purpose.

I shall not undertake so large a theme as the discussion of suffering and evil in general. I shall treat these only incidentally as they bear on the smaller subject, — as to what our personal relation to suffering ought to be, as to whether we have power voluntarily to see to it that evil shall not harm us. If we have, some hints as to how.

Whether at the present time we are passing through a peculiar sorrow or not, whether we have recently been,

whether we are fearing some evil as imminent and threatening, whether this be our situation or not, it would be very strange if all of us have not had some contact with suffering or evil first or last. And, at any rate, we may be sure that, if we have been free in the past, we shall not be free in the future. Some day it will touch us.

This, then, is a theme that comes home to every human life. We are all vitally interested to know how we ought to face difficulty, loss, sickness, trouble, burdens of any kind. We are interested vitally to know whether we can control these conditions, so that out of the experience good shall come, and not evil. For we know, as we look over human life, that good does not always come. There are cases — we must have observed that — where a person by misfortune has been made bitter, pessimistic, hard, who is out of sympathy with the world, who has lost faith in any good government of human affairs, and who lives a life of dull and hard endurance. And you know the newspapers tell us this almost every day, that there are those on whom the burden of life becomes so heavy that they fling it away in disgust or in despair.

So all things do not work together for good to all people now. Is there any reason in the nature of things why these people who have become bitter and pessimistic and hard might have become something else? Is it a matter within the limits of their own control? As these experiences face us, may we feel that we have some power over them, that we can tread them under our feet, that we can make them stairways by which to climb, or that, on the other hand, we may be crushed and overwhelmed by them?

I imagine that one trouble, with a great many people, in dealing with these matters lies in the fact that they have inherited a traditional way of looking at them, which becomes an additional difficulty. For example, I am called to see a person who is sick, some one who has lost a friend, some one whose property has been swept away, some one

who has met with some overwhelming calamity; and almost always, even in the case of those that I have supposed were familiar with modern ideas of the universe,— liberal people, Unitarians,— almost always I find the cry crushed out of their hearts: What have I done that I should suffer this way? Why have I been selected to bear this burden? Why is my neighbor free? Why does God punish me in this manner?

Now this way of looking at things is, as I said, a traditional and inherited way, which the world is only beginning to outgrow. Let me instance the fact that almost throughout the Old Testament the Jews show very plainly that they believed that, when anybody was suffering, when anybody lost a friend, when anybody was sick, when anybody lost property, when anybody was cast out of social or political favor, it was on account of some sin he had committed, it was a punishment from God.

Take as an illustration familiar to you all, and therefore calling for less detail, the case of Job. No matter whether it is historical or not, it shows the feeling and thought of the people at the time when it was written. Job loses his children, his property is swept away, he is out of favor with his neighbors, he is afflicted with a sore disease. And, as he sits cast down amid the ruin of all his hopes, his friends gather around him. And what do they do? Do they recognize his integrity, the nobility of his character? Do they offer him the tender kind of sympathy which we should be likely to offer in a similar case to-day? No. They accuse him. They say to him in effect: Job, you are covering up some secret sin: you have been doing wrong. Why do you not confess what it is, and put it away from you, that the anger of God may depart?

You could not convince any of them that this was not a direct infliction of punishment from God on account of something which Job had done. But, then, this was the prevailing opinion of the time; but we see the birth of the

nobler, higher, truer thought in the vigorous, indignant protest of the sufferer himself, who says he has not sinned, he has been true, he has been noble, and this is not a punishmet. And he appeals to God himself to appear for his vindication, and says that, if he could only come into his presence and plead his cause before him, he knows he should be acquitted.

And yet the writer of the book offers us no solution which is satisfactory to-day. The only thing he does is to give him more children and more cattle and herds and more money and more social position again. He does not satisfy our ethical sense of what is just and right. And in the New Testament we find similar ideas prevailing. You remember that story of how the blind man was brought to Jesus, hoping to be healed; and those standing by said, "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" It did not seem to occur to them that blindness could be the result of any natural cause. The man who was blind, the man who was deaf, the man who was afflicted with disease, was treated as a sinner. He had committed an offence against God, and was suffering punishment. This was the prevalent idea as it is illustrated both in the Old Testament and the New.

There is another one, which I confess does not comfort me much in dealing with this problem, which is sometimes referred to; and that is that punishment is specifically sent to us on purpose as a discipline. We are being whipped, so to speak, for our good.

Now it seems to me enough to dispose of both of these theories merely to look over the face of society, and observe admitted facts. One of the Psalm writers says he has never seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread. I have, a good many times: you have; and we know that the question as to whether a man is righteous often has little to do with the future prosperity of his children. We find a great many people getting along very well in the world who

are not distinguished for righteousness; and we find a great many people tender and noble and true who are failures, as we say, from every other point of view.

We look over the world, then; and we see that the people who are suffering are not necessarily at all bad people. Take, for example, a case that flashes into my mind, that of Sherman Hoar, the son of Judge Hoar, of Massachusetts, once a member of Grant's cabinet, who has recently died in his mid career. How? Was it a punishment? Was it a punishment to his wife and his children and his friends? He died as the result of a patriotic, true, noble consecration of himself to the welfare of our suffering soldiers. Can you think of a death like that as an arbitrary allotment of God on account of something he had done or on account of something that his wife had done? We must get out of this Old Testament atmosphere, and most of the atmosphere that predominates in the New Testament as well, before we can look at facts like these, and face them bravely and truly and tenderly.

Is it discipline? Think for one moment. A perfectly wise and all-powerful and a perfectly loving father would not be likely, would he, to discipline a child by sending him something in the way of discipline, when he could foresee quite well that the effect of it would be evil, and not good? We could not approve of that method of discipline here on earth. Take Lord Byron as an illustration. Byron was born club-footed. His mother, instead of showing tender sympathy, in her anger and disappointment and high temper, sometimes taunted him with his infirmity. This was not a punishment for anything that Byron did; for he was born with it. We cannot consider it rational discipline, for it made him pessimistic and hard; and, as I said, a perfectly wise, all-powerful, and loving Father would not be likely to send an experience to a man like that, seeing that it would make him worse, which this actually did.

So it seems to me we cannot satisfactorily solve this prob-

lem of what we are going to do with trouble either from the point of view of regarding it as a direct punishment or as specific discipline applied to a particular case. Let us stop, then, for a moment, and consider how it is that the world is governed as a matter of fact, and let us see what is actually demonstrated.

We know, then, beyond any question, that the universe is governed in accordance with universal and unchanging law. And, if we stop and reason about it a little, I think it will appear to you that this is the necessary way for a perfectly wise being to govern. If God does a certain thing, so to speak, under certain conditions, it is because it is the best thing to do under those conditions. And, given the same conditions, he will do the same thing again, will he not? The uniformity of law in the government of the universe follows, as a necessity, our recognition of the wisdom and love of God. This universe is governed in accordance with the unchanging will of God. Let me suggest that it is necessary it should be governed in this way for other reasons. If it were not, we could never know anything. What do we mean by knowledge? We mean the observation of facts and principles as illustrated by facts; but, if they were liable to change all the time, do you not see that we should be in the midst of perpetual confusion? That which is true to-day might not be to-morrow, might not have been yesterday. So with all our study we should know nothing, we should get nowhere.

Then, again, it would be impossible that there should be anything in the way of moral development in a universe like this. What do we mean by moral development? We mean the struggle with difficulties, obstacles, temptations, and the conquest of these. There is necessarily, then, the existence of these obstacles. It is necessary that we should be in a universe the laws of which it is necessary for us to understand and obey before there can be anything like moral culture, moral growth. So we need to be in a uni-

verse of perfect order if we are to be sane, if we are to know anything, if we are to study, if we are to grow, if we are to advance.

And, then, we need to be in a universe where evil exists. Evil is nothing to be apologized for, nothing for which God needs any defence.

Consider a moment. What do I mean by consciousness? How can I be conscious of anything? I can be conscious only through the observance of contrasts. I know that I am, only because I can set over against myself other people and other things which are not myself. If all the world — I think I have had occasion to speak of this before — were of one color, it would be precisely as though we were blind. There would be no distinguishing one thing from another. If we had been perfectly happy all our lives long, and the world had always been perfectly happy from the beginning, nobody by any possibility could ever have known it. There would have been no consciousness of happiness; and it would have been as though it did not exist. Nobody would ever know anything about pleasure, could he not contrast it with pain. Nobody would ever know anything about beauty, could he not set it over against ugliness.

So, I say, evil is a necessary thing, pain is a necessary thing, sorrow, trouble of all kinds, are part of the raw material of life out of which we are to create the fine and sweet and beautiful and blessed things. A man must be tempted, must be capable of temptation, must have sinned, before he can be spoken of as virtuous, before he can attain the quality of sainthood.

This, then, is the kind of universe in which we actually are. We need not apologize for it: we have to recognize it as a fact. Now, as we meet with these experiences of evil, those that seem evil to us,— of wrong-doing, of unkindness, of hatred, of opposition, of every sort,— as we meet sickness, as we meet the loss of friends, the loss of property, as we face death, the practical question is, What shall we do with them? what shall be our attitude towards them?

Now, as I said a little while ago,— and I wish to give a few further illustrations in the way of making the idea plain, — these things sometimes help people; and sometimes, so far as we can see, they hurt them. They make some people noble, they make some people ignoble. The illustration which I wish to speak of now is one which perhaps you have never thought of in this connection.

Take the case of Walt Whitman. What was the course of his life? When the Civil War broke out, he went to Washington, and devoted himself as an unpaid volunteer to work in the hospitals. He did those thousand and one things that a surgeon and hospital attendants cannot do. He wrote letters for poor fellows who could not write themselves or who were dying. He took little mementoes which they wished to leave, and saw that they were sent to their friends. If he found any of them desirous of a special delicacy, he hunted that up and satisfied the craving. If he found some one lonely, he sat by him to keep him company, or read to him, or talked to him about home, or, what sometimes was better yet, let him talk about home. He gave himself in this way for years.

What was the result? He came out of the experience a diseased and broken man so far as his physical health was concerned. He lived the rest of his life in poverty.

Was this punishment? He made this experience do some of the sweetest and noblest work with which I am familiar in all the world; for let me say — and I can say it without exception — I do not know a character in all history who bore disease and suffering and poverty more nobly than did he. Never one word to even his most intimate friend of complaint, even of regret, never a bitter word, never the lack of utter trust in God, a belief boundless, that took in the universe and included the lowest and the meanest in the same destiny for which he hoped; and he met death with the utter serenity of a soul that knew it could never die. This is what he did with his sickness, what he did with his

poverty, what he did with the loss of that which almost everybody considers essential to a comfortable life.

On the other hand, as I intimated a little while ago, you know perfectly well how the thing works in the opposite direction. I had a friend some years ago,— a prosperous business man who had become wealthy; but he lost an arm. Then his health declined; and for years he has been one of the most hopeless, pessimistic, bitter, hard, unhappy men that I have ever known. And yet his money is left, and wife and child left; but he has turned this loss, this suffering, into gall, while Whitman made of it the very sweetness of the water of life.

Here are the opposite cases. I have in mind a lady left in her youth alone by the sudden death of her husband, left with one little boy to train and care for. And her husband, expecting to inherit wealth, saved nothing; and so, when he died, she was left utterly helpless, utterly dependent. And she began to grow bitter, and spend hopeless days and weeping nights over her desolation, until at last she waked up to the consciousness of what she was doing; and she said to herself, If I go on this way, I shall not only be miserable myself, but I shall make everybody miserable with whom I come in contact, and nobody will be glad to look on my face or to welcome my society. And then she rose in the magnificent majesty of her womanhood, and trod the evil under her feet, and to-day — sweet, sunshiny, true, unselfish, devoted, noble — is a joy to everybody who knows her. This is what she has made out of the raw material of her sorrow.

I need not enlarge upon examples like these. You know what they are. I know a case of a woman who was left desolated by the death of her child and her husband, and who the rest of her life simply has been sunk in the drunken indulgence of selfish sorrow,— unhappy herself, the cause of unhappiness to others. I know another — I think I have referred to her here before: if I mentioned her, you would

easily know her name — who in the midst of similar loss has consecrated her life and her fortune to the good of the world, and is the centre of light and joy and hope to thousands.

These are the facts of human life: these are illustrative cases. If I had time, I could give you specimens by the hour of the good or the ill effects of these experiences of trouble and sorrow and loss.

Now what shall we do? How can we make these things help us? We can, in the first place, get rid, utterly rid, of that old and hurtful theory of things that looks upon God as punishing us when we suffer, that even looks upon him as whipping us for our good. I do not believe one word in either of them. We are in the midst of this universe where these things must come to us as the natural incidents of life. If I believed that God, so to speak, looked up and down the streets of New York, and said, In this house somebody shall die to-morrow, on this street so many people shall be taken sick with such and such disease, — if I thought he arbitrarily apportioned these things in this way, I should be compelled to lose my respect for his wisdom and my trust in his goodness.

And, when I see the results of these things in the individual lives of men and women, I can no more believe in them as discipline, in the old sense of that word. They are the raw material of life, first or last, that come to all of us; and it is a question simply with us as to how we will take them, as to what we shall do.

Putting aside, then, these old theories and recognizing this universe as a universe of law, let us do with these things precisely what we do with other things. There is a deep-down, fundamental, and universal principle right here. If we wish the universe — that is, God — to help us, what do we do? We try to find out the method of his working, and get into accord with that method.

For example, I want to get across the Atlantic Ocean.

What do I do? I cannot change the least wave, change the ocean, its winds, its tides, any of these conditions. But I can build myself a ship, and place masts in it, and stretch sails across; and I can adapt myself to the winds, and they will blow me to my desired haven.

I wish the water power of the world to help me. Can I change it any? Not one particle. I can build a mill on the bank of a stream, and use the natural and necessary force of the water to turn my wheels.

The lightning I cannot conquer. We talk grandly of it sometimes, about controlling and wielding the lightning. We do nothing of the sort. We simply humbly study the lightning's methods, and adapt our instruments to its eternal and changeless forces. We do not rule: we obey; and by obeying we become mighty.

And so in every other department of nature. May it not be as well to try it in the department of the spiritual life? If I wish God's spiritual powers of love and trust and tenderness and service, I must find out what those are. I must get into right relations with God; and this, I take it, is the foundation for Paul's saying, that everything works together for good to those that love God, and to nobody else. All these things work together for good to us who get into right relations with these eternal and divine forces, and become obedient to them and let them serve us,— for nobody else. There is the eternal and universal law.

We may, then, by studying these conditions and becoming lovingly in accord with the divine purpose and will, make the evil forces of the universe help us, and lift us up and lead us on.

And there is another thing in a special department of life that we can do to keep ourselves from becoming over-bitter. A good many of the evils that come to us, come as what seems to be the result of the carelessness and wrong-doing of other people. Shall we allow ourselves to become bitter towards them on that account? In other words, note what

it means because a man is mean in his relation to us. Are we going to let it make us mean in our relation to him? Is that what we are going to let it do with us? or shall we take the attitude towards the evil men of the world of that loving, divine, pitying charity which faces it with the power of good only, to comfort and redeem?

And, then, there is one other thing. If we only get clearly into our minds the meaning, the highest significance, of life, then, it seems to me, we can face almost anything. What is this life of ours here for? If a man makes up his mind that he is not going to call his life a success here on earth unless he can make a large amount of money, so that he dies rich, why, the chances are that he will fail; for a very, very few people can do that. Even if we are all equally able, there is not money enough in all the world to go around. So that is an impossible idea.

Are we going to count life a failure unless we are healthy all our life through? No success along that road. Are we going to count life a failure unless we win social success or political success? For the most of us that is marked, "No thoroughfare." There is no progress along that road, either, for the most of us.

But if we study it deeply, and get it into our minds that the great thing in life is to take the kind of men and women we are, and become true, become tender, become noble, become sweet, become faithful, loving, helpful; if we only discover that that is what life means,— then do you not see it is possible for us to fail in every other direction and yet win the goal? Nobody on the face of this earth can really hurt you or me except you or me. Death cannot do it, disease cannot do it, poverty cannot do it, hatred cannot do it, malice, revenge,— none of these things can really hurt us, — the real person, the child of God; while, in the cultivation of this real person that we are, we can make every one of these things helps, and not hindrances. You remember Tennyson says, in one of his very noblest verses,—

"I held it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things."

Do you know that the one that Tennyson refers to here as singing to one clear harp in divers tones is Longfellow? And do you know that the poem of Longfellow's which he has in mind is "The Ladder of Saint Augustine"?

I cannot close better, illustrating the truth which I have been trying to speak, than by reading a part of this poem of Longfellow's to which Tennyson refers: —

Saint Augustine, well hast thou said
That of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame.

All common things, each day's events,
That with the hour begin and end,
Our pleasures and our discontents,
Are rounds by which we may ascend.

The low desire, the base design,
That makes another's virtues less;
The revel of the ruddy wine,
And all occasions of excess;

The longing for ignoble things,
The strife for triumph more than truth,
The hardening of the heart, that brings
Irreverence for the dreams of youth;

All thoughts of ill, all evil deeds
That have their root in thoughts of ill;
Whatever hinders or impedes
The action of the nobler will,—

All these must first be trampled down
Beneath our feet, if we would gain

In the bright fields of fair renown
The right of eminent domain.

. . . . . .

Standing on what too long we bore
With shoulders bent and downcast eyes,
We may discern — unseen before —
A path to higher destinies.

Nor deem the irrevocable past
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If, rising on its wrecks, at last
To something nobler we attain.

Our God, in whose law we may live, in obedience to whose changeless laws we may grow strong, let us discern the way that leads to Thee, and resolutely set our feet in that way, though it be one of pain and toil. Amen.

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DON'T CARE — RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL.

As my text, I take the words which are recorded in the eighteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, the last part of the seventeenth verse,—"And Gallio cared for none of these things."

There is a hymn which I wanted to have sung to-day, but it does not appear in our hymn-book. I shall therefore take occasion to read it to you; and let it stand at the forefront of my discourse, as an appropriate motto. It is written by Bishop Coxe, of Western New York: —

We are living, we are dwelling,
  In a grand and awful time,—
In an age on ages telling.
  To be living is sublime.

Will ye play, then, will ye dally
  With your music and your wine?
Up! it is the Almighty's rally.
  God's own arm hath need of thine.

On! let all the soul within you
  For the Truth's sake go abroad.
Strike! let every nerve and sinew
  Tell on ages, tell for God.

Gallio lived in one of the two most wonderful epochs of human history,— one of the two, I say. I shall refer to the other one in a little while. What was this time when Gallio lived? It was the end of one great period of human advance and the birth of another. I suppose all of us have some time thought that we should have liked to have wit-

nessed the scenes that illustrated the beginning of Christian history. If we had seen Jesus, we think we should not have been quite indifferent to him. If we had listened to the gracious words that fell from his lips, we think we might have understood something, at least, of what was going on. If we could have seen the downfall of Jerusalem, if we could have witnessed the magnificent enthusiasm of Paul, if we could have seen him breaking down the barriers of the old-time, narrow Judaism, and scattering the seeds of the new thought and the new life to make a harvest as wide as the world, we think that we should at least have had some appreciation of what was going on.

Let us note for a moment, as I outline it in certain broad strokes, what it was that was really taking place. The Jewish people had been undergoing a process of providential education for more than a thousand years. Taken as a wild tribe of Nature-worshippers, with such naïve and childlike thoughts as are recorded in some parts of the book of Genesis, their education proceeded. They had climbed up through the work of priest and prophet, through such struggles as are indicated in the book of Job, until they had risen to the lofty spiritual monotheism that is illustrated in the second Isaiah, and at last had crowned their national thought and life by the truth and the teaching and the self-sacrifice of Jesus of Nazareth. And now Paul had arisen, and said that this should not be merely the heritage of one little people, but belong to mankind; and so he was travelling from city to city and province to province, preaching his human doctrine.

Glance outside the borders of Judaism. The Eastern speculations of Babylon, Persia, and India, had reached as far as the Mediterranean basin, and had permeated the thought of the time. Greece had lived, thought, achieved, from the rude barbarism of the life pictured in the immortal poem of Homer to the level of the civilization of the age of Pericles. Sculptors had wrought, artists had

painted, men had thought, Aristotle and Plato had written, Socrates had asked questions in the market-place that have stirred and thrilled the mind of man even until this present hour. Greece, as to its outward civilization, had decayed. The gods of Olympus had become chiefly memories. They had ceased to satisfy the heart of man; but Grecian civilization and Grecian speculation had overrun Rome, had touched the life of Palestine, and was shaping Jewish thought. This Greek speculation in the city of Alexandria was attempting to combine the old Hebrew religion with the Greek philosophy, and the effects of it are living in the theology of to-day. Rome had risen from a little tribe of Latins to its long history as a republic, had become an empire, had conquered the civilized world, fused many tribes into one nation, had opened roads clear to the extremes of Britain, so that the business of the empire not only, but the thoughts and religions, hopes and aspirations, of the time, were free to travel to the utmost limits of the world. And now Rome was nearing the period of decay. Its gods were practically dead. The common people were worshipping the emperor as, at least, the visible symbol of the peace and prosperity which they enjoyed.

What does it mean? It means that the whole world up to this time was coming to its culmination here in the basin of the Mediterranean. It means that the old world was passing away and a new world was being born.

And right here in this little scene which is depicted in the Acts of the Apostles we find Paul, face to face with the old narrow, limited, tribal ideas of the past, ready to proclaim and build up the universal religion and life of the future.

It was in an epoch like this, when a world was dying and a world was being born, that Gallio lived. And the only record we have of him is,— "And Gallio cared for none of these things."

Let us come now for a moment to the modern world and

find a parallel, a striking parallel, of this old-time condition of affairs. I said at the outset that Gallio lived in one of the two most important epochs of the history of man: that other epoch is now. We are living in this; and in some respects it is even more wonderful, more significant, more critical, holding in it more for the future of the race than even did that time of Gallio's, now nearly two thousand years ago. For what are we witnessing? Such a change does not take place in an hour. We are witnessing, since Copernicus wrote, the passing away of all the old world and the coming of new heavens and a new earth. A change so profound, so radical, so far-reaching, so revolutionary in its sweep and outcome, as man has never known before. We are witnessing the passing away of the old-time conception of God. Every dream of God that the world has had up to this hour is fading out of the thought of man. The localized God in heaven, the outlined Deity who created the world by fiat and who governs it arbitrarily like a despot,— this God is passing away as truly as the Jupiter of Olympus.

A new thought of God, profounder, deeper every way, grander, bringing him nearer to us than we have ever dreamed of his being before, is taking the place of this old idea.

Another change, as I have had occasion to point out to you in other connections more than once,— the old humanity is gone. Evolution has given us a new conception of the origin and nature of man, new problems of destiny, a new idea of what constitutes human salvation, as to how it is to be attained. No question but is up for fresh consideration and some new solution. The universe is being ransacked. Never was such a change since the stars first sang together. And yet what is Gallio doing? The Gallio who represents the old-time theology is meeting in convention and discussing what? Some little change in the canon here or there, some matter of a robe or altar decoration,— some little petty question of detail, and caring for none of

these great things. As if a man living in a house whose foundations were gradually being taken away should spend his time decorating this room or that, and putting out a bay window here or an extension of the house in some other direction, utterly unconscious that the house itself is to pass away!

And outside the churches ten thousand Gallios who have learned just a smattering of evolution and modern science — enough so that they can plume themselves on their ability to doubt the old, but with no sort of appreciation of the new forces at work out of which a new universe is to be born — are going their way, caring for none of these things.

I wish now to turn for a moment, before I consider this Gallio a little more closely, and note his relation to political, to governmental affairs.

Go back for a moment to the time of the Gallio of the Acts of the Apostles. Rome, with its mighty and marvellous history behind it, was declining towards its decay and fall. The great peace of the time of Augustus still remained in form, but the emperors were becoming less and less competent to hold the reins of power. The subject peoples were growing more and more restless. The barbarians on the confines of the empire were looking with more and more ardent longing to this decaying power as its possible prey. And yet Gallio, the governor of a province, a respectable Roman, eminent either for his own natural ability, or having some personal influence, or pull,— as we should say in the modern world,— with the emperor, is appointed to this official position; and he and his fellows, what are they doing? Are they studying the problems of their time? Are they showing any care for the empire, for the welfare of its people? Are they discussing the principles upon which it depends? Are they looking out at all for its future? They are stripping the provinces with greedy hands. They are acting as parasites on this decaying life. They are doing everything they can to hasten that decay. The empire may

stand or fall for all of them, so they can wring enough out of their temporary kingdom, so they can go back rich to Rome to flaunt it for a while in ways of popularity and power. They care for nothing else? For none of these great things does Gallio care.

Let us come now to the modern world again, touching upon one or two political matters, as we have already touched upon religious. I am not preaching politics. I claim the right, so far as the welfare of man and the coming of the kingdom of God are touched thereby, to discuss freely and frankly these great principles which are in conflict to-day, and of which we ourselves, whether we will or not, are a part.

Note for a moment one great fact. I had occasion, I think it was a year ago, to call your attention to this,— that the achievement of order and liberty in human government was the second greatest achievement after which the world had ever striven. Place religion, if you will, first. After that, the most difficult thing for men to attain is a stable, orderly government that at the same time permits liberty to the individual citizen. Study the history of human efforts in this direction, and you will find almost always that wherever you have order you have tyranny, and where you have liberty you have anarchy. To combine the two has, as I said, been almost the most difficult problem that man has ever striven to solve. We have partly solved it up to the present time in two countries only which are of first-rate importance,— in England and in America. From the far-off times of the Saxon meeting under the trees, down through the struggle of the barons in the obtaining of Magna Charta from King John, and on to the time of Milton, Sydney, Cromwell, and those noble men, to the period of the Revolution, when the best sentiment of English statesmen was with the Pilgrims and the Puritans who, for the sake of freedom, had come across the winter seas, we have pursued this ideal; and at last here in

America, as the result of the struggle, the toil of ages, as the result of self-sacrifice and even death on the part of countless thousands, we have obtained a country in which we have order, and in which we have at the same time complete personal liberty for the individual.

And yet, as we look abroad over this country, how many are the men, the voters to-day, who stop seriously to consider what has been gained, this magnificent heritage of the past? How many stop to weigh the result of their thought, their action, their influence? How many are there who care,— care enough to give time, care enough to give money, care enough to give effort, care enough to give thought,— not to the election of this man or that one, to the success of some party scheme or plan, but to the general welfare of the country, to this ideal of order and liberty for which the country stands?

Thousands and thousands of Gallios are there throughout the length and breadth of our country who care for none of these things. The farmer, whose talk is of oxen and crops; the banker, interested chiefly in his per cents; the politician, who cares to get an office for himself or a friend; the average business man, absorbed in caring for his business and his family, to educate his children,— ten thousand good people, if you will, but who care for none of these things on which the stability of the country depends, which provides the very opportunity for them to live their life and carry out their grand personal ambitions and aims.

I wish to touch now for a little on the present position of the country, and ask you to care here. The first hundred years of the republic are past. You know that I opposed, so far as I could, the war, believing that the ends we desired could have been attained in some other way. But now I see the people standing as though at the parting of the ways, where they are to choose either one of two roads. Let me indicate where those two roads lead, for a moment, and then ask whether we are really at the parting of the

ways and whether we have so much choice in the matter as we suppose.

There are those who, heeding the words of the Farewell Address of Washington, and their interpretation of the Monroe doctrine, tell us it is the business of this country to keep within her old-time borders, to take possession of no acre of land beyond those limits, to develop our own resources, to solve our municipal problems, the problem of dealing righteously and successfully with the negro, with the Indian. They tell us we have enough to do at home, and that, if we stay here at home and look after our own affairs, we shall, by setting an example of a free country, well governed, well ordered in every department, be serving the race better than we can possibly serve it in any other way.

That is one theory of our future.

Another is that we are to take possession, not only of Porto Rico and Cuba and Hawaii, but of the Philippines as well; that we are to extend our borders, spread the ægis of our protection over all these feeble peoples both in the Atlantic and the Pacific; that we are to reach out and touch hands with England; and that, standing side by side with her, we are to help solve some of the great world-wide problems that are to face us in the future.

The advocates of this theory tell us that a nation has no more right to be selfish than an individual. They say, Granted that we might become rich and peaceful and prosperous by staying at home and minding our own business; but we did not mind our own business, they say, in regard to Cuba, and it has led us into interfering with the business of peoples further still away. So now, they say, it is our business to help in the education, the development, the deliverance, the uplifting, of the peoples of the world, to do what we can to see that none, however feeble, are oppressed, to see to it that the avenues of trade are open and made free to all, to play our part in developing a world-wide civiliza-

tion, carry with our power our ideals, and teach them to the tribes that are lower than we until we lift them up to our own level. This may indicate the other ideal.

Are we free to take whichever one of these roads we please? I am not here to advocate the adoption of either one or the other of these theories. I am here to call upon all men who have hearts and consciences and brains to remember that the future civilization of the world is at stake, and that it is their business, not to play the Gallio who cares for none of these things, but to think and give effort and influence in whichever direction they are convinced the future ought to lead us.

But are we quite free? We have taken Porto Rico, we have taken Hawaii, we have destroyed whatever order or government there was in Cuba; and we are under moral obligation to see to it that the last state of that island shall not be worse than the first. So, as a matter of fact, we have on hand at least an indefinite protectorate of Cuba. The question as to whether we are to take the Philippines or not seems to me one now only of detail. We are committed to the principles whether we will or not; for we have stepped beyond our old-time borders, and we have begun to take a hand in the settlement of the differences that concern other nations and other races.

But, as I said, the one thing I beg of you is to care in regard to these great matters, and not selfishly take the benefit of all the struggle and toil and blood of the past for your own little selfish behoof, and let the great world of the future wag as it will.

There is one other matter touching our present political situation that I should consider myself false to my noblest ideals of duty did I forget. We have turned over voluntarily,— if we do not like it, it is our own fault,— we have turned over the city of New York into the keeping of one man. You remember that Louis XIV., when some one spoke to him in regard to the State, said, superciliously: "The

State! It is I." So of the city of New York. One man may say, "It is I." No power, no combination, at the present time seems able to balk or to hinder the working of his will. He now reaches out to put the State also in his pocket as his own personal possession; but even this, in my judgment, is not so serious a matter as is one other thing on which I must touch. He has boldly threatened that which is the one last resort of right and liberty in a republic; and that is the integrity of the judiciary. He proposes to prevent the election of a man. Why? Because he has not shown a "proper consideration" for him.

Is the city of New York filled with so many Gallios who care for none of these things as that this scheme can be successfully carried out? I see by the morning paper that ten thousand less men have registered as voters this year than registered last. At least ten thousand Gallios who care not enough for country, State, city, justice, truth, to take the trouble to have their names written down and cast a slip of paper into a box. Had I the power, I would brand every one of these men with the disgrace of non-ability to vote. I would disfranchise them. I would cast upon them the stigma of men who, confronting the highest interests of the race, do not care.

As I said, it is all in our own hands. We can control the city of New York, the State of New York, this matter of the judiciary, if we appreciate it enough and care enough about it to make the effort. If we are bound hand and foot, robbed, exploited to the heart's content of the worst element, then it is simply our own fault; and we have no right to charge it upon Providence or destiny, or anybody but ourselves.

Let us look this Gallio over just a little, and see if his features look in the least like our own when we face a looking-glass. He is ignorant, perhaps; but a man in a republic has no business to be ignorant. There are opportunities for him to find out enough to know how to vote intelligently.

It is wicked to be thus ignorant. He does not think, perhaps. Do you remember what Dr. Johnson said to Mrs. Thrale, his friend, when she excused herself for something he heartily disapproved, by saying, "I did not think!" He said, "Madam, you have no business not to think." You have the organ of thought, and it is the characteristic of a man; and it is your business to think beyond your friend, beyond your party, to the welfare of mankind, the welfare of your city and your country. He is self-centred, selfish, taking care of his own little affairs. But what do you think of a man who will take benefits that other men have paid for by struggle, by effort, by tears, by blood, and not be unselfish enough, at least, to pay back in kind, and see to it that the world is not poorer because he has lived in it?

These Gallios belong to every department of life. You will find artists so absorbed in their art that they have no time, they say, for political affairs. You find musicians who care so much for this heavenly and divine gift that they have no time to look after the welfare of their fellow-men. You will find literary men cultivating their style and learning effectively to express an idea, but with no ideas that are of any importance to their fellow-men. So you find business men, very honest men. They are good husbands, perhaps. They pay their debts. As the world goes, they are all right. Only, when they stand before the supremest questions of the age, they do not care for any of these things.

Think a moment what Gallio loses for not appreciating. Think what he must have lost, living in the time of Jesus and Paul, merely by not knowing that the universe was changed, and waking up to an appreciation of the magnificent things that were taking place about him. Think what a man misses to-day merely by being interested in a bank, or a horse, or a friend, or music, or a play, and not appreciating that the heavens and the earth are changing, the old passing away and the new being born.

And then think what Gallio loses, no matter in what age of the history of the world he may live, by not rising to an appreciation of the fact that he is permitted the sublimest, the grandest privilege of which the human heart and brain can conceive. You and I, if we will, can help God create a new world. We can make our influence tell for all the future, if we will.

Then note another thing. I have said that Gallio was frequently an honest man, a kindly man, a good neighbor, true to his wife and children; but I want to press it upon your attention,— and, oh, I wish I could reach the thousands and thousands of Gallios that there are in this country at the present time, I wish I could reach them with my word!— I want to press it upon your attention that this man is doing more harm than all the scheming scoundrels of the world! Let a man be an intelligent scoundrel, and oppose actively and earnestly the best things, and he is not quite hopeless. I think it was Mr. Collyer who, in a lecture some years ago, said the next best thing to a splendid angel was a splendid devil. There is a little hope of a splendid devil. He has reason, sense, experience, power of observation. You may appeal to him, you may argue with him, you may possibly make it for his interest to put himself on the side of right; but there is no hope for the Don't Cares, for the indifference of the world, for this dead inertia.

Let a ship put to sea; let the winds blow in the teeth of the course which wishes to travel. So long as there is a wind, she can make it serve her: she can tack; and, though she goes slowly forward, she can advance in spite of the wind. But a dead calm, where the ship sits as idly as "a painted ship upon a painted ocean,"— what can he do in a calm? Simply drift. All his power, all his skill, useless against — nothing at all. Better the most intense opposition. Let a ship get lost, as they tell us in sea tales they sometimes do, in the midst of miles on miles of seaweed, which clogs the prow and entangles itself in the screw, and the

shipmaster is helpless, helpless against this mere drifting, lifeless, useless obstruction. Give him power to use the screw and the engine or the sails, and the strongest sea current he could laugh at; but he is helpless in the midst of a nuisance like this.

And so it is these people that do not care that hinder the progress of the world in religion, in government, in every direction, more than the bitterest and intensest of all opposition. The man who does not vote at all votes twice, and votes wrong both times. His own vote is lost, and it takes a decent vote to make up the difference. They talk sometimes about an off-year in politics. There are no off-years in the progress of the life of God and his plans for humanity. There is always a choice: one thing is always at least a little better than the other; and the world goes on not by leaps and bounds. We shall never have a chance to vote in the millennium, we shall never have a chance to elect an archangel to any office. We have to choose that which is a little better than something else, and go ahead a step at a time; and so the world ever grows towards the better.

The one thing we need, then, to-day, in our religious and political life, more than all things else combined, is that all the people shall care.

"Wanted: Men,
Not systems fit and wise,
Not faiths with rigid eyes,
Not wealth in mountain piles,
Not power with gracious smiles,
Not even the potent pen.
Wanted: Men.

"Wanted: Deeds,
Not words of winning note,
Not thoughts from life remote,
Not fond religious airs,
Not sweetly languid prayers,
Not love of cant and creeds.
Wanted: Deeds.

"Men and deeds:
Men that can dare and do;
Not longings for the new,
Not pratings of the old;
Good life and actions bold,—
These the occasion needs,
Men and deeds."

Father,— dare we speak that word, and then be recreant to the high trust Thou hast committed to us? Let us feel what it means to be Thy children, to be capable of helping Thee help on the world, and then let us give ourselves to this dear and wondrous service. Amen.

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BY

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THE PARABLE OF "LOT'S WIFE."

"Remember Lot's wife."— LUKE xvii. 32.

I THINK it is fair to presume that the account in our Bible of the destruction of Sodom is as true in its essence as the story of the destruction of Pompeii. I have read in sound books that the indications of a great disaster are quite clear; while the doom which fell on the twin cities is mentioned by Strabo and Tacitus, by Josephus and Jerome, and is still preserved in the long-enduring traditions of the low-down region, and locked fast, fast within our Bible.

But I have no doubt that, in the course of the many ages, myth and fable came in to cloud the primal truth of disaster and doom, because here was a great and awful mystery; and, since there was no light for those who would try to solve it on the earth, they turned toward heaven, and said Sodom was burned because of her unspeakable vileness. Therefore, these stories are told of her depravity to account for the fire and brimstone, and "justify the ways of God to man." Still, the truth is this: that Sodom might have been another Salem of the old time or the new, yet she would have burnt all the same, because the terms of such a burning lay where she stood; and so, as Jesus said in the Gospels, speaking of the fallen tower, these disasters of Nature and life turn on wider reasons and point to deeper lessons. Sodom was, very likely, no better or worse than the cities all about her, with heaven and earth and hell within the circuit of her walls. There would be a heart of goodness there and an infernal depth of sin, as there is in New York; and, between these, the fair average of mingled good and evil

which forms the staple of our human life,— honest men and good women, who had no religion to speak of, but a great deal of human nature, with merchants who would not deal in lies, and mechanics who would not make them at the bench or the anvil; homes as wholesome in their way as yours and mine; and temples in which, through all the dimness, human souls felt after God. And so it is just as fair to say that the disasters which bring towns to swift ruin now and then in the West, or by fires in the woods, are God's judgment on their sin as to say this of Sodom.

So the picture we see is something like that we read of in Pliny the Younger, two thousand years later, about the doom of Pompeii,— fire and sulphur, smoke and ashes, in the heavens and on the earth, with two fair cities in the grip of doom; a life in easy motion yesterday, bent on its business or pleasure, and to-morrow a waste of smoking cinders; the people dead or out on the plains, where they have fled for their lives; women and children weeping, and men, with hard, set faces, wondering what they shall do, now that Nature has broken her faith with them and destroyed her own sanctuaries. While here, between yesterday and to-morrow, stands this poor woman, drawn to Zoar through one instinct and to Sodom through another. The husband and children are before her: the old home, with its household treasures, is behind her; and she is no more able to break with the past than she is able to close in with the future. And so she stands there through all the ages, the central figure in this grim picture,— a hard and bitter petrifaction, a pillar of salt, as they came to call her, pointing out the black pillar in the cleft to this day, as they guide you about the foot of their Dead Sea.

It does but make the truth which lies within her story still more searching again to consider how strong the reasons were which compelled this woman to linger in her broken past until she petrified. She had lived in Sodom — a wedded wife — a good many years; while it is a fair guess

that this was also her native home. So I think I can see how she must have looked on that morning of her doom. The wild eyes and the white face are turned to the dear old home-place and the household gods, while the deepness of her nature is driving and clinching the nails which bind her to her fate. Another type of woman would not have had to encounter any such tug at the heart-strings. The husband and children were safe ; but could she not see her way to some poor flotsam and jetsam, to be plucked from this sea of fire, and get one more glimpse of what she held so dear? So she was not a sinner, as she stands in this light, but a martyr, rather, dying for the past, as those of another nature and endowment die for the future; and for this reason, poor thing, she was petrified where they are sanctified.

Still, this touch of pity we should all feel for her in such a case must not blind us to the truth that her life rested on a deeper loyalty than this which drew her backward to her death. To be true to her own soul, that day, she must not go back or stand still, but turn once for all from the things which were passing away in the fires as she watched them, and find her way into a world which was still to be trusted, and a life which had a future in it as well as a past.

There was nothing but dismay now in the backward look. There was the dawn of a new day in looking forward, and darkness lay behind her ; but there was still light for her ahead, and life. Her husband was there waiting, and her children, and old friends to be sought out who would help them or who needed help from them, and new friends were waiting she had never heard of to clasp her hand. This shock about the steadfastness of nature and the providence of God was also to be met, and the doctrine readjusted to the new light which might come to her even through such black shadows, so that she should be still nearer God after her despair than she was before. Indeed, think of the trouble as we will, there was no use looking backward ; and use here was exactly one with duty.

The demand was for that heroism in which the woman is always more than a match for the man,— the heroism so many women show to-day who, with their hearts planted deeper in the past than ours ever can be, follow us to the ends of the earth, swallow down their pain and make no sign, because that is only love and longing, but this is love and duty.

So the main trouble with Lot's wife, as I think of her, was this: that, with so much in her of the truest worth in its own way, she was not a whole woman when the call came to reveal the best a woman can do, the high truth, and the deep, our great Teacher insists on when he mentions her name, of utter loss through saving, and of all gain through losing. The demand was this: that she should set her face toward Zoar, which, being interpreted, means smallness, and turn her face away from Sodom, when all she had was there, except that which is best worth having; and so she was petrified through clinging to the lower life, when the higher life was the watchword of her one momentous day.

So it seems clear to me, once more, that this story is a parable drawn from one human life, touching the worth of Paul's great word, when he bids us leave the things which are behind and reach toward the things which are before. It shadows out to us the danger which lurks in clinging too close to what is touched with dissolution, and hints how, through this clinging to the past, we, also, may become as petrifactions to the whole wealth of hope and joy which lies in the future for every one who will still push out, and, when fate and fortune have done their worst, cry with Mrs. Browning, "Here's the true thing to do: let Heaven see to the rest."

For it is not hard to see how this petrifying process is forever going on, and, first of all, in the widest reaches of our life. It was the trouble with men like the Stuarts and Bourbons of the old days, of whom it was well said, "They could learn nothing and forget nothing," and with great numbers of men and women in our own Revolution, whose hearts

clave fast to the things which were dissolving, so that they could not or would not push on into the new time, and so became petrifactions of the ancient royalty and the divine right of kings to do wrong. And here, also, in our own time, we have to meet the same trouble in our public life,— in men very much like Lot's wife, who can learn nothing and forget nothing, petrifactions and pillars of salt, hard and bitter about what has come and gone, and quite unable to understand that, when old things in human government are dissolving in the fires of time, and what time brings, then the one thing to do is to make for the new life and the light ahead; to be dutiful still, and hopeful; and to begin again in Zoar, which means smallness, that we may find the largeness, the wealth, and the worth of the new time. And, in our own life, this truth I would touch holds good in men and women who look backward to the world and the life of a hundred years ago as a sort of paradise lost, and flaunt the time they live in with taunts and jeers,— men and women who can no more go back to the old than they can push forward to the new. So they grow hard and bitter, petrify where they stand looking backward, and become pillars of salt. You shall find them in the Christian ministry — swarms of them still — and in the courts of the law, and those who, in their time long ago, welcomed the new fair lights of science, but, as Huxley said to a friend of mine one day, should die at sixty for fear they will try to undo all they have ever done. Men of every order, who can neither forget nor learn, and should see, but cannot see, that what they considered the best once, for which there could be no better, is dissolving in the fires of time as they look and lament, they cannot and will not push on into the new certainties, but harden down at last into petrifaction for which there is no hope this side the better world.

It is very beautiful and touching, I know, in some of its aspects,— this loyalty to the past as it was in this woman. But it is fatal, if we let the old time overcrow the new, staying

with the past so that we grow hard and bitter, because this is not loyalty to the past, but slavery and serfdom. While this is the truth: that it is only those who can break with the past when the past breaks with them in *this* world, and then turn to the future with a new hope and new expectation, only these who can live their life and do their work to the best purpose, and find in each its own reward.

We touch the same peril again, where it was so hard on the woman that day, in the loss of fortune and position. It is hardly possible in the nature of things that my belongings should not be a part of my being, as they were of hers. There is something of my life in the business I have built up. I would love to turn it into a firm, perhaps, and share it with my sons, while the term is true to my feeling: it must rest on sure foundations, it must be a *firm*.

So it is with my money and all my treasures. No man knows so well as I do what they are worth to me, or how they are all won and woven in with my life, if they are all well and honestly won. But some sudden stroke comes I can no more prevent than I can prevent an earthquake, and then they begin to dissolve.

Some men save such things at the price of their honor, perhaps. I cannot do that, but I can lose with them what is of far more worth than they are. I can lose my fluent and hopeful nature, and petrify. I must encounter these troubles, and it may be they will shake the very centres of my life; but I need not stay within the shadows of my misfortune. I can begin again in Zoar, which is smallness, and say I will not allow defeat and frustration to be the masters of my life. Yes; and, though I have to dwell in smallness all my days, as many a better man or woman has done before me, if this purpose is in me, then, to push on to Zoar, the sun will not shine and the rain fall on a pillar of salt, but on a cheerful, striving man or woman who can take what God gives us and be thankful, or be quiet in any case, and know what the Master means when he says,

"A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

I note how this truth holds good again in the things that touch the deeper life, and how the hardness and bitterness we have to notice so often in those who cling with this backward look to beliefs which are passing away is just this petrifaction and pillar of salt. Men and women set out in life furnished with a complete outfit of creeds and dogmas in the faith that they are all true as the eternal truth of God.

A plenary and perfect inspiration of the Bible, a trinity of deities, an atonement through the shedding of blood, our own utter depravity and helplessness, a heaven we can do nothing to deserve, a hell to which the vast majority of the human family must sink finally and forever, and a church which, to this mighty and variant world we live in, is no more than some tiny spot in the desert where there is a clump of palm-trees and a spring.

Now, to a great many in our day, these things are dissolving, they have had their day; and the very conditions under which some of them grew to their greatness are burning them up, while the foundations on which they rested are rocking to their doom, and this is the day when we save to our losing or lose to our saving. And so, when this wonderful and masterful light shines for me and shows me what must dissolve, though I have thought God himself was pledged to sustain it, then there is but one thing to do; and this is to leave the things which are behind,— yes, and to forget them, also, if I can, and have done with them forever, for the sake of the things which lie before, that I may push on into the new life. But we all know this is what a great many men and women — and we may be among them — cannot do. Their very heart is in the things that are passing away. The shadows which lie behind are stronger to hold them than the light ahead is to draw them, and so the day comes when they petrify and grow bitter toward the new

truth and the new life. Their faith is dead and they are clinging to a phantom.

But do not mistake me here. I say not one word about those to whom these ideas and dogmas are still true as ever, and who find help in them and are helpful to others through them. I mean only those who know the substance of faith has gone, but still cling to the shadow, and prefer dissolution to life. These must break with the past for the sake of the future. They must begin again in Zoar, which is smallness.

And is not this the truth once more about those who cling to the past for reasons I would touch most tenderly,— the past in which fair hopes are ashes which were once as roses wet with dew and the springs that keep a summer heart in winter.

Lives to which ours seemed to be only as the shadow to the light, the beloved of all beloved, we trusted it maybe would close our eyes, would say tender words over the dust when we had drawn our last breath, and touch with tears the still white face,— tears which would be felt where the amaranths spring in the summer time of heaven; but they are gone, and we are left. And what can we do but petrify? I say we do this at our peril. We cannot stay in our dead past even for these most sacred reasons. We must turn our faces and feel our way toward the new life and the new hope, or we shall do just what multitudes have done through such sorrow and loss: we shall grow hard and bitter even to the eternal love.

I would hold on to the heart of the old Scotch peasant, then, who moaned through the pain of it all, and the loss, "Lord, I am sair grieved, but I am no angry; for, though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee."

I know how hard it is to begin again and meet life cheerily and hopefully, when you are shorn of that which gave life its bloom and glory, to begin again in Zoar, which is smallness, and throw out new tendrils from the heart and

climb again toward the sun. But this must be done if we will save through our losing.

We also must look forward, and step out in the faith that death has only dissolved what we could cling to through these dear entanglements of time and sense; but, after this, death has no more dominion, and life begins again. And we must do this because there is no hope and no help, but only hurt, in this lingering over that which turns to bitterness and hardness in so many forlorn men and women we have known.

Here, then, are some lessons I would learn and teach from the parable of Lot's wife. Is it in the life of the nation and the commonwealth that old things pass away? These are always the conditions of a true and good government, and have been through all time. But am I of those whose hearts dwell with the old life, the old order, the old things that have suffered dissolution? I must take care lest I become a petrifaction in the life of the republic, one who can learn nothing and forget nothing; for this brings bitterness as of the bitterness of the Dead Sea.

Am I one of those who can live only in the past in the world's wonderful life, dwelling with the grandfather in my love and liking rather than the grandson. Then I must flee away to Zoar, and dwell there for my soul's sake, because even here religion is not one thing and these another. They are from on high, and therefore in their own degree divine. Everything of the new time which holds a hope in it for the help of the world and its uplifting must find a welcome from you and me. Every new discovery in science and the arts of life, with whatsoever can give us some new insight of the laws of nature, are, therefore, the laws of the Most High, and touch our life with gleams of a new nobility.

In our faith, also, we must turn our face toward Zoar, which may still mean smallness.

The old faith in the Bible is vanishing away. No

thoughtful man believes now in his heart that it is in every word the Word of God, while still he shall believe that all scripture given by the inspiration of God is true. The old belief in the fall with all this means is passing away; and we can believe now that, while men have fallen, and nations, man has slowly but surely risen from the days when he dwelt in no Eden, but in the caves and dens of the earth, and that, so far from being the helpless creature and good-for-naught we used to hear of, he is the most helpful God ever made; and that the church of the living God in this world is no small river running through a desert, but is one with his life in all the ages and all the tribes, touching all the roots and seeds of goodness in all the lands, and causing them to spring forth not in one name only, but by every name given under heaven whereby we may be saved.

In all these ways, and in more than I can name besides, in these many years of my ministry, I have found those who were turned into pillars of salt who were human once as she was in my parable,— human and full of gracious desires; but their life lay within the clasp of the seen and temporal, and sent down no root into the unseen and eternal. Life was a feast to them, in which the last wine was still to be the best; and all the divine decrees seemed to point toward the patriarch's happy dream,— I shall die in my nest, and bless the day I was born. So ran their dream, but it came to a rude waking. The home was empty, the beloved were no more. There they had passed through sore suffering, some of them, in which they grew so beautifully patient; but these grew impatient. *They* trusted, but these lost their trust. They whispered of their hope and the blessed rest, but these found no rest; and, when the dear and holy dust was buried, they became petrifactions and pillars of salt. They might meet you with a smile. It was only a mask in the deepness where God dwells: there was no God. They were clinging only to the past. The springs of hope were

dry. The seeds of a diviner life born of the sorrow were withered. They were sown on salt. It is the saddest sight in the world for me,— this hardening of human and gracious souls that I have seen in those who could not push on to Zoar, which is smallness, and find the mighty secret of the Calvaries as they tower above the Canas in our human life. It is the last truth I can touch in this darker reach of our life and lot; while the truth of the parable, touching the other side, waits always our accepting,— that sweet and noble hopes and expectations can spring from our graves.

The ancients say that, when the first mother wept for her first great devouring sorrow, some tears became pearls of great price, while where some fell the Narcissus sprang, and some were seeds of the star-eyed daisy. That is another parable we may nurse in our hearts when this peril touches us of the pillar of salt; for blessed is the man and blessed the woman who can find these pearls and these blossoms of the soul's life born of their tears.

UNITARIAN CATECHISM

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

Price,	Paper,	per Copy	20 cents
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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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THE EVILS OF RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL PESSIMISM.

I TAKE as a text from the thirteenth chapter of the book of Numbers the thirty-first, thirty-second, and thirty-third verses: "But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."

It is no part of my present purpose to discuss the question as to whether this story which is related in the chapter from which our text is taken is history or tradition. The story itself in its inner meaning is true to human nature and human life; and that is all the truth about which we need to concern ourselves to-day.

After many efforts and many failures, Moses has succeeded in leading the children of Israel out of their long captivity in Egypt. They have crossed the stretch of country lying between Judea and the borders of the promised land. Here they pause; and the people's leader selects twelve men, one from each of the tribes, to go up and spy out the land to find out what sort of country it is, how the people dwell, whether in tents or in walled cities, whether they be few or many, whether they be strong or weak,— to discover the difficulties and the possibilities of the situation.

They are gone forty days. At last they return, two of them bringing specimens of the products of the country, and reporting that it is a land that floweth with milk and honey. These two indeed recognize that the inhabitants are strong, that the task before them is a formidable one; but they advise that, under the leadership and inspiration which have been theirs, and which have delivered them from captivity, they are quite able to carry the task through to the end, to take possession of the country which has been promised them. So runs the report of two out of the twelve.

The other ten, however, bring in a story that is quite contrary to all this. They declare that the land is poor, its products poor. It is a country that is bad; it eats up its inhabitants. It is full of walled cities, full of gigantic men. They describe the terrors of the situation, which appear to have been the only things they were able to see; and they say, We are not able to conquer the country. And then the people cry out in their despair, and begin to murmur against God and against Moses, and to wish that they had stayed in their captivity. Why have we been brought out here to fall by death in the desert, or by the hands of those too powerful enemies?

And then the story tells us that God declares in his anger that these men who have brought in the evil report and those who have accepted that report and have murmured against their leaders shall never see the promised country: they shall indeed perish in the wilderness. But the promise goes on that their children shall inherit that which, but for this discouraging condition of their own hearts, might indeed have been theirs.

There are always, in every epoch in the history of the world, people who look hopefully upon the tasks which are placed before them, who believe in God, who believe in humanity, who believe in themselves, and who therefore believe in the future. There are also connected with every great epoch in the history of the world these other men, rep-

resented by the ten out of the twelve spies who brought in their disheartening report.

I trust that all of you, at some time or other, have read Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." If so, I shall not need to describe at length the illustration which I have in mind. Bunyan, with that marvellous insight which revealed the genius in the uneducated tinker, tells us that in Pilgrim's journey from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City he met one enemy more dangerous than all the rest. He says his pathway was surrounded by tempting demons at every step. He met the giants Pope and Pagan. He met tempting and dissembling smooth-tongued men. He met and fought with Apollyon himself. But the one most dangerous enemy that he came in contact with throughout his whole career was the giant Despair, and the one most difficult period in his whole life was when he was shut up in Doubting Castle.

You see the significance of this thought,—that the one thing which can kill a man or a movement quicker than anything, than all things else, is the loss of belief in the possibilities of that movement. Pilgrim was in a sad case indeed, until at last he thrust his hand into his bosom and found there a key called Hope; and in the presence of that key the doors of his dungeon flew open, and he was upon the king's highway again towards that glorious future which had so far lured him on.

I wish to illustrate my theme for a few moments at the outset by citing a few historic samples of these discouraging, disheartening types of man, and show the part that they have played in hindering the advance of man.

When Jesus, for example, first appeared, and preached that new sweet gospel which is the finest hope of the world to-day, were these persons ready to listen to that gospel? Did they measure the meaning, the force, the beauty, of the words he spoke? Did they believe it possible that he was to usher in the next step on and up of the human race

which leads us on towards the ever dreamed-of kingdom of God? They stopped for none of these things. They spent their time in criticising and fault-finding and doubting. In the first place this Jesus was not born in any one of the towns of Judea from which it was expected that a prophet might come. Consequently, he could not be a prophet. In the next place, no matter how wise his words, he was uneducated, he had not been trained in the schools; and, consequently, the apparent wisdom must be no wisdom at all. He dined with publicans; and so those who were zealous, over-zealous, against recognizing any rights or authority or power of Rome would have nothing to do with him. He drank wine at festivals; and so the Nazarites and the ultra-prohibitionists of his day would have none of him. He associated with the common people; and so good society cast him out. They spent their time in other words instead of trying to get at the heart of the great truths he brought to men, in criticism and fault-finding and jealous attempts to undermine and overthrow his power. And these people, more than his outright and downright enemies, hindered the progress of the work which he came to do.

It was this question and criticism at every step,—"Have any of the scribes or pharisees believed on him?"—and this and that and the other,—this it was which stood in his path and hindered his work; and it was only when Paul, who was not one of the original apostles, and who himself was criticised and cast out as a heretic by those that constituted the Christian and Jewish authorities of his time,—it was only when Paul, by the magnificence of his great belief in God, in truth, in the mission of the Nazarene,—it was only when he flung himself against what seemed to be the impregnable power of Rome that all opposition gave way, and the world at last, in spite of the doubters and critics and reformers, was at his feet.

Let us take a step further up the pathway of history, and come to the time of Luther. How was it then? Luther

had plenty of faults. He was coarse, he was rash, he was dreadfully outspoken. He struck not only his enemies, but he shocked his friends. He was in such dead earnest that his phrases were not always either politic or polite. And so we find that the critics and scholars mostly held aloof. Erasmus saw so many faults in Luther's personality and in Luther's methods that he held himself neutral. He believed in the Reformation,— oh, yes; but he could see so many good things in the other side that he could never make up his mind heartily to commit himself to any one thing in particular. And so he balanced between the two, and criticised, and stood in the way; and all those who sympathized with him did the same. And these were the men, again, that made the work of Luther hard; and, had it not been once more for this consuming, overwhelming faith of Luther,— faith in God, faith in the drift of the world, faith in the possibilities of his time, faith in the great truth that he claimed to represent,— we should not have had the modern world wide open and free to human thought as it is to-day.

Let us take one more step, and now out of the definitely religious world into the governmental and political. We have made George Washington a saint,— as some one has wittily phrased it,— we have turned him into a steel engraving, we have removed him from actual contact with human life. And I remember with what startled surprise I came upon the fact that anybody had ever dared to criticise him. And yet, as we study carefully the history of that time, we find that no man in all history was ever more roundly, heartily opposed than was he. From the time he stood under the elm in Cambridge and took command of the Continental forces until he retired from the presidential chair, his footsteps were dogged by jealousy, by suspicion, by fault-finding, by criticism, by every kind of obstruction, so that his worst enemies were not those who wore the British uniform: his worst enemy was not even the outright

traitor, Arnold. They were those that hesitated in following him,— hesitated in furnishing him supplies, hesitated to recognize his power, hesitated to accord him leadership, that surrounded him with an atmosphere of fault-finding and criticism, and so hampered the freedom and the strength of every step.

You would be surprised if I had here with me, as I have not, a scrap of paper taken from the issue of one of the Philadelphia newspapers at the time Washington retired from the Presidency, congratulating the country that this baneful, blighting influence had at last been removed, and that the country was free to breathe once more, no longer dictated to and dominated by such a malevolent power as he was to his country.

Why do I speak of this? Because we are doing precisely similar things to-day. Because this is not only an historical incident, but an issue of the hour.

I must refer to one more case, that of Mr. Lincoln in the Civil War. His greatest enemies were not the people down South, they were not even the Northern sympathizers with slavery. Some of his bitterest enemies, some of the worst obstructionists, some of those who stood most in the way of his success, some of those who did most to bewilder his head and make his heart ache, were the conspicuous, noted reformers of the North, those who had done more, if possible, than he had to bring on the issue. And why? Merely because Mr. Lincoln did not at once and straightway accept their peculiar personal ideas, because he did not at once and straightway follow the path which, to their minds, was the only one, because he did not submit himself to their dictation; they criticised, they found fault, they abused him. They raised an atmosphere of cruel suspicion that surrounded him and hampered him at every step.

As an illustration of the way he felt, possibly you may remember the terse, keen, witty story which he himself was accustomed to tell. Some of these criticising men came to

him, and found fault with his methods because he did not do this and because he did not do that, because he did not hurry up in this direction or another; and he turned on them at last, and said: "Gentlemen, suppose Blondin had in small compass all the treasures and possession which you own in the world, and had them in a bundle strapped upon his shoulders, and he was walking over a tight rope above Niagara. What would you do? Would you keep shouting at him: Blondin, stoop a little further to the north! Lean a little to the south! Hold the balancing-pole you are carrying in some other fashion! Blondin, stoop a little forward! Keep a little straighter! Would you keep shouting at him like that, or would you not rather hold your breath and keep still till he got safely over?"

I speak of these historical incidents, I say, because they are living issues with us to-day. We have here in New York, and in the United States, these prophets of evil, these over-critical reformers, these people who have identified their peculiar methods and ideas with the absolute truth of God, these people who preach and teach and write and talk in such a way that they become obstructions, they become sources of discouragement, they take the heart out of people, they make them feel that it is not worth while to try.

Since the sermon which I preached two Sundays ago, I have received letters which probably have suggested to me the work in which I am engaged this morning. One young man writes me that he considers the political situation absolutely hopeless. He thinks that whichever side he looks at is a little worse than the other. And what is the outcome of his attitude? Simply, he says: "I haven't voted for years, and I don't propose to until things get better." I wonder how he expects them to get better. Who is it that is to make things better? The people who hold aloof and become discouraged and disheartened after this fashion? And I think, friends, that it is the class of people that I am

referring to who are largely responsible for this utterly discouraged and disheartened state of mind.

I received another letter, the writer of it an educated lawyer in this city; and he thinks that it is the work of these religious and political teachers that has created such a general apathy, so that there are thousands on thousands who have given it up. Now it is not my business, and I am not going to assume that it is, this morning, to tell you which way you ought to vote or which way you ought to believe in religious matters. The one thing I have in mind, If I may, is to hearten the people that I reach a little, and help them to believe that there is ground for hope, that there is a field for successful effort, that God has not forgotten the world, and that all the men in it are not absolutely foolish or hopelessly bad.

If I believed, for example, that either one of the political parties at the present time was all ignorant or all vicious, why, I should give it up, too. I should see no use in making any effort whatsoever. Friends, it is not true. The great majority of the people in both parties are not overwise, perhaps; but they are sound at heart. They believe in God, they believe in men, they believe in the city, they believe in the country, they believe in the possibilities of the future.

I wish to refer for just a moment to one or two utterances, attitudes, of different people at the present time. One of our prominent ministers has, if he is correctly reported, preached a most discouraging doctrine concerning the condition of average human nature. He said that the race left to itself — that is, without outside interference and help — constantly tends to go from good to bad and from bad to worse. Why do I refer to this? This is not merely a religious question: it is a political, a social, an industrial question as well. Because, if this is the kind of race of which we are a part, then do you not see that our condition is hopeless indeed? If I believe that God is against me,

what am I, to pit myself against Omnipotence? If I believe that he is letting the whole world drift downward to the bad, what is my puny effort in any attempt to arrest such a tendency as that? But, friends, I do not believe anything of the kind.

One of my brothers was once being examined as to his fitness to teach school when he was a young man. The committee knew him well, and knew his general fitness for the work; and so they only asked him one question, and that was as to whether the Mississippi River ran up hill or down.

The idea seems to be that the stream of human history must run down hill. I believe it runs up hill. Any stream of water may run up hill; and thousands on thousands of them do, when the force at the head is adequate or is higher than its present level. And, since God is the force at the head of the stream of human history and human tendency, I believe it is capable of demonstration that human nature, left to itself,— if it ever is left to itself,— does not tend downward, but is ever sloping upward through the ages towards some higher, finer issue than we have yet discovered or attained.

If I believed, for example,— and here let me come to a little very practical plain talk with you,— that our office-holders were all vicious men, that they were all seeking, in underhand and dishonest ways, their own advantage, why, what would be the use of trying? Why should we elect men if this is the condition of the majority of them? And yet some of our superfine critics, it seems to me, if you accept their almost daily utterances on the subject, are hammering the idea into us that this is the condition of our State legislatures, of our Congress, our Senate, of all the men managing to-day our public affairs. Friends, I do not believe one word of it. I believe that the great majority of the men in Washington are true and earnest and noble men, seeking according to their light the best welfare of the

country. I believe that on the average, year by year, there never was in any country nobler and less selfish, more unselfish men than they are, more devoted to the highest and finest things. Of course, incidentally, some may desire to help a friend or cannot refuse to, when appealed to. But that many of them are corrupt men, as our wise critics constantly declare, I do not for a moment believe.

I have a friend, whom I have trusted and honored for years, who was elected to Congress; and he said the one thing that impressed him more than anything else year by year was the good sense, the uprightness, the honor, the integrity, of the men with whom he had daily to deal.

These critics point us now and then, by way of making us more discouraged, to the condition of things in England. Do you know, friends, that fifty or a hundred years ago, at least during the latter part of the last century, the condition of things in England was infinitely worse than it ever was in this country during its entire history? No one could be appointed to civil service or in the army unless he was a member of some of the noble families or connected with them in some way: it was by favor or purchase. Thousands of pounds were openly, freely, unblushingly, spent in carrying certain elections. Boroughs were bought and carried in the pocket, places in Parliament were given away, and even the religious guides and teachers in the churches were appointed to their places, not for learning, not for piety, but because of social influence, because they were younger members of noble families. And yet England is outliving this. She was not lost or sunk by this condition of things. She has been grandly outgrowing it, and sloughing off these conditions year by year; and so may we.

I do not believe that there was ever a public service in the world more honestly conducted than our postal service, our internal revenue service, any of the great affairs of the country. I have conversed with men who have been connected with these; and they have told me that the amount of

money that was lost by dishonesty, incapacity, or carelessness in any of these great public departments is almost infinitesimal. I say this that we may have heart and courage.

I used to hear,— and this illustrates what I had in mind,— I used to hear temperance reformers preach and lecture. They were men who had some peculiar pet method of curing the evils of society; and, in order to impress their hearers and rouse them to the necessary energy and enthusiasm to accept their particular fancy, they represented every method as a failure, and pictured the world in this direction as getting worse and worse. And I used to have the feeling, when I listened to them, If half what you say is true, let us give up the attempt. If the world at the end of two thousand years of Christian history is getting worse and worse, cannot be trusted out of sight for five minutes, if its tendencies are all wrong, why, then, where is any ground for faith in God, faith in man?

And yet, in spite of these temperance prophets of evil, the world — very inconsistently, to be sure — went on getting some better every year, as it has from that day to this. And so in every department of human life the world has been going on getting better and in a more hopeful condition every year.

I wonder why it is, I wonder what is that tendency in certain people that makes them see all the good things in the past and all the bad things right around them at the present time. I was talking with a lady on the train coming from Washington the other day; and she was deploring the amount of machinery that was being invented and used in the world, because she thought it was supplanting hand-labor, throwing people out of employment, and leaving them in a worse condition than they were before. I consulted Carroll D. Wright, who is probably the best authority on this subject in America; and he told me that the actual fact was that the invention of machinery creates so many new methods of production that it employs more people than

were ever employed by any hand process, and the result is that the lowest stratum of society is becoming lifted day by day and year by year, so that one of the most hopeful things that ever happened was the wide-spread introduction of machinery.

And then they forget another thing,— the people who are competent to manage the machines are more intelligent, better read, of better habits. A drunken man cannot manage a delicate machine, so that there is more temperance in this whole department of human life than there ever was before.

Another illustration. There are hosts of ministers who are deploring the wide-spread use of the bicycle, so many people wickedly ride on wheels on Sunday and do not go to church so much as they used to before wheels were introduced. And then I was much interested and instructed by a conversation I had with one of the leading manufacturers of one of the shoe cities of Massachusetts, who told me that nothing that had happened in fifty years had done so much to elevate the morals of the workingmen in their great shoe-shops as the wide-spread, almost universal use of the wheel. Why? It is simple enough, if you stop and think. Men cannot enjoy smoking when they are rushing at such rapid speed on a wheel. A man who is intoxicated cannot ride a wheel; and, then, those who ride the wheel are taken out into the country, they have fine physical exercise, they are brought into contact with nature, they are taught to discern and notice some of the fair, sweet, healthful things they see about them, they breathe the fresh air, they are lifted to higher realms and better issues. And so, at any rate, he said that the influence of the wheel had been of more avail in lifting the moral level of the city than all the preaching and teaching together for the last fifty years.

These as indications that the wailing that there is abroad over the changes which constitute the modern world and make it what it is are not overwise, and do not probe matters quite to the heart.

If I had time this morning to glance over human life, I could show you that almost every single one of the human conceptions as to human degeneracy are contradicted flatly by the fact. Men live longer now than they ever did before. There are fewer deaths by disease in comparison with the population than there ever were before. Men are more and more getting control of the sources of disease, and more and more power to control human conditions. Houses are better, clothing is better, food is better. And then the work people — day laborers as they are called — are infinitely better off than they ever were before during the last fifty years. In every direction is a tendency to increase of wages and the lessening of the cost of living, with the exception of house rent; and this means that the houses are better than they used to be; for you can get the same kind of house cheaper than it was seventy-five years ago.

And so, in spite of all these prophets of evil, the level of the world is lifting; and men are coming ever nearer and nearer to God. There never was so much love, there never was so much tenderness, so much kindness and brotherliness and human help in the world as there is to-day. And, if you read the newspapers and note the criminal statistics, you will get an entirely false impression. This great, seething city of New York, is it a hotbed of crime? No. It is a magnificent flower garden of all the virtues. The number of crimes committed in a year are infinitesimal as compared with the number of people that are here. The great majority of all political faiths and all religious faiths are living helpful, honest, loving, manly lives. And all these qualities are increasing year by year.

Why is it, then, that some of these people get such contrary impressions? It seems to me that in the religious world we may find a little guidance here: A man assumes that his particular way of looking at God and the universe is the only way, and that, if people are not religious after his fashion, they are not religious at all; and so you get the

hopeless pessimism of a man like Mr. Moody. I am not sure whether I have quoted it to you since I have been here; but it indicates the way a great many religious people are thinking. Mr. Moody says there is no use in hoping to better the general condition of this world. He says it is a wreck, bound to sink, and the only thing we can do is to get off as many of the crew and passengers as we can, and let her go. That is his philosophy of the universe and human life. Why? Because Mr. Moody is perfectly sure that his theory of God and the Bible and the condition of man is the one true theory, and, because so few people agree with him, all the world is hopelessly lost.

If we could only get rid of a little of this conceit of infallibility, perhaps we should be able to believe a little more in the virtue of hope. Take some of the political critics I have referred to, who are always telling us that the office-holders and the people looking after our affairs are seeking their own advantage. I get so weary of this civic omniscience and infallibility that I feel almost as if, for the sake of getting out of that kind of atmosphere, I am ready to be as wicked as they think we are. I cannot help feeling a good deal of sympathy with the people of Athens before they banished Aristides the Just; for, if he went around airing his political and civic virtues and talking about his infallible wisdom so much as some of our modern religious and political prigs do, I certainly cannot blame the people for wishing to be relieved from the tension and strain by putting the man outside of the walls.

It is this assumption of infallibility in religious and in political matters as well that leads so many of these people to do what they can to fling the control of the city and State and country into the hands of the people whom they think, at any rate, all bad. It seems to me that we need to learn that the world does not go ahead by leaps and bounds. There never was a political or religious situation yet, where there were two sides, where there was not one side

a little better than the other; and the way this world gets on is by our casting our influence in with the little better, taking the world a step ahead, taking what we can get if we cannot get everything we desire, and holding on to that if we may, and trying another year to take the next step.

And yet there are thousands of the best and most respectable people we have who are hopelessly casting away their influence, shall I say? No, they are doing worse than that even from their own point of view. They are casting the balance of power which they might hold into the hands of those that they declare to be the worst element of the community. And, if this is reform, then let me have nothing more to do with reform the rest of my life.

Now at the end what shall I say? All the progress that the world has ever made in any direction or department up to the present time has been born of a great forward and upward-looking faith. Believe in God. Believe in the integrity of humanity. Believe in the sanity of the world. Believe in our own power to consecrate ourselves to the truth and to help it on. This, I say, is the birth of all advance. It is belief that points every telescope towards the heavens. It is belief that adjusts every microscope in its search for the infinite beneath us. It is belief in the orderliness of the universe that has been at the bottom of every discovery, of every invention, that has created all the fine and sweet things that have transformed the face of the earth. It is belief in the soundness of things, belief in the possibility of at least slow but sure advance.

And so this morning, if I might, the one thing I would leave as the lesson of what I have had to say is the warning that you are to turn deaf ears to the prophets of evil; that you are not to listen to the men who bring in their discouraging report, whether in city issues or State or national. I may or may not believe that the United States is at the present time taking the wisest course; but one thing I do believe: I believe in the soundness, the sanity, the honesty

of the people of the United States, taken as a whole. And I believe that, whichever way they move, they not only may, but will, help on the progress of mankind, help lift the level of the world's civilization. They may not do it in my particular way; but I believe that God has some little thing to do with the march of human affairs, and that he has not let go his hold, so that we are drifting and plunging down towards an abyss. I believe in that

> "One far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves."

And so I am ready to sing that other word of Tennyson's,—

> "Not in vain the distant beacons. Forward, forward let us range.
> Let the great world spin forever" *up* "the ringing grooves of change."

Father, this old world has always been in Thy hands. Nations have risen and nations have fallen, individuals have been born and have died; but the world, Thy child-man, has gone forward and upward, and Thou art leading us still to-day. Amen.

UNITARIAN CATECHISM

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

GEO. H. ELLIS, Publisher, 141 Franklin St., Boston, Mass.

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"Some great cause, God's new Messiah"

MESSIAH PULPIT

NEW YORK

(Being a continuation of *Unity Pulpit*, Boston)

SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

VOL. III. NOVEMBER 18, 1898. No. 7.

THE WORD OF GOD

GEO. H. ELLIS
141 FRANKLIN STREET, BOSTON
104 E. 20TH STREET, NEW YORK
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THE WORD OF GOD.

I TAKE as a text, from the Gospel according to Mark, the seventh chapter and the thirteenth verse, the phrase which I have used as my subject,— "The word of God"; and from the first book of Samuel, the third chapter and ninth verse, the further words,— "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth."

I have received during the last week or two, together, I suppose, with all the other Protestant ministers of the city, a request from the New York Bible Society that I should consider this second Sunday of November as Bible Sunday and to take that for my theme. I very much fear I shall not be able to preach the kind of sermon which the managers of the society would desire; but it seems to me that the topic is in itself so important, there are so many misconceptions surrounding it, and the real truth is so vital to our highest welfare, that I cannot do better than take this for my subject.

What does the New York Bible Society consider as the word of God? I wish to read you just one or two sentences from its Annual Report. It speaks of the distribution of the Bible in the city of New York, and says that the record of its distribution "should be of great interest to all of God's people who desire to see a *wider* circulation of his word among those who are destitute of it." Then, on the next page, "Surely, the Christian Church of this great city should stand by us at this time and help us, so that the word of God may not be withheld from those who are hungering for it."

Is it really true that the New York Bible Society is in

possession of the word of God, published, bound, so that it may be easily distributed to those who need it, whether they are hungering for it or not? If it be true, then they ought to consider this the supremest object of human life; and the money of the "people of God" should be poured out in floods of millions, in order that the world may read that which God has spoken for its guidance.

But let us note a moment. I wish to give you a suggestion of opinion from one or two persons, not heretic, but those who are in substantial theological agreement with the managers of the Bible Society itself. In conversation with a prominent Presbyterian minister in one of our great cities within two years, he said to me: "I should consider it the most disheartening fact in the world if I believed that God ever gave an infallible revelation of himself to his children, because," he said, "if he ever did give us any such revelation, something tragic and serious has happened; for we most certainly do not have it now."

This Presbyterian minister then did not believe that the Bible, taken as it stands and as a whole, is the word of God.

In the year 1893 Rev. Robert F. Horton, one of the most prominent Congregationalist orthodox ministers in England, a London preacher of great reputation, gave a course of lectures before the Yale Theological School at New Haven. I wish to read to you one or two words from those lectures: "How are we to regard, in what place are we to put, in what manner are we to treat, the whole Book or Bible, which has often been called by a careless inexactness of speech 'the word of God'?" On the next page: "There is no authority for the usage in the Bible itself." A little lower on the same page, "I say there is no foundation in the Bible itself for the common practice of speaking of it as the 'word of God.'" He advises the students to challenge those who use the phrase, and to ask them what support they have in Scripture, what rulings of prophet or apostle, what hint of the Lord himself, for this thoughtless

use of so august a name. "Startled as so many people are by the question, they are, if they are honest, bound to admit that the usage is without Scriptural authority. If they are dishonest, they angrily turn upon those who put the question, and denounce them as infidels. An examination of the Bible itself will show that the authors who composed it did not dream of making the claim that what they were writing was written by God or spoken by God. The loose or careless habit of describing the Bible as the word of God is, more than any other single cause, responsible for the infidel literature which has flooded the Protestant world in the last century and the present. It should be part of the obligation to truth which every living preacher feels laid upon him to deliver the Church from the confusion and the mischief and the error which have been incurred by this one baseless notion that a Book, written by human pens, translated, compiled by fallible human minds, is or can be as such the word of God."

This, I say, is good orthodox authority from one of the noted preachers and scholars of the modern world.

I wish to suggest, then, at the outset, that it is not scholarly. I think it is not right for the Bible Society to publish and issue this book, and call it publishing and distributing the word of God. If there are scholars among them, they know the facts in regard to it. Even if it were originally in the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts the absolute and infallible word of God, we know it is not now; for these manuscripts have been copied and transmitted down the centuries; nobody ever saw or handled one of the original manuscripts; and we know that, in the process of copying and transmitting, thousands and thousands of variations in the readings have occurred. That one fact alone makes it seem impossible for the finest scholar of the world to determine with any sort of accuracy that he has even one single sentence precisely as it was written in the first place.

And, then, as we pick up the book and look at it,—

"Book" we are accustomed to call it,— we find it is not a book: it is a library. The books were written by different men during a period covering from a thousand to fifteen hundred years. Concerning most of the books, a very large majority, nobody in the world has the slightest idea as to who wrote them, as to when they were written, as to where they were written; and they contradict themselves in every sort of fashion precisely as one would expect a series of books that make up a national literature to do. It is very much as if,— and orthodox scholars have said substantially the same, though of course I cannot give it to you in their words,— it is very much as if one should cull from English literature, beginning with "Piers Plowman," through Chaucer, down among the poets, historians, economic writers, law-makers, clear to Tennyson and Browning, should make up in this way a large compilation of literature of prose and verse, of proverb and law, and bind them together in one book. Would you expect each one of these different writers to agree with all the rest? Would you not expect to find progress or growth from one age to another?

And it is precisely this that we do find in the Bible. From the most naïve conceptions of the origin of the world, of the origin of man and woman, of the nature of humanity, of the nature of God, the thought grows and climbs until we have at last the grandeur of the second Isaiah and the spiritual sublimity of Jesus. All the writers contradict each other at every point, precisely as you would expect them to do when you look at the natural origin and natural growth of the Bible. Mind you, none the less in the truest sense of the word divine because natural; and I shall try to indicate in what sense I mean that before I am done.

This Bible, then, as we look at it, is full of errors,— historical errors,— full of scientific errors, full of moral errors, errors of every kind. There are any number of good orthodox critics to-day who will admit that it is full of scientific and historic errors; but they say it was never intended to

teach history. They say this simply because errors have been discovered; but they appear to be just as earnest and sincere in their historic and scientific statements as they are in any other. They do not think they are guessing at truth in one case and propounding infallible truth in another. And the only reason these apologists say it is in error in history and in science, and is not intended to teach those things, but is infallible in other matters, is because we cannot pursue their statements into the realms of the unseen and bring them to the point of critical adjudication. But, if we find a book full of errors concerning all the things we can discover, is it necessary that we should trust it in the things that are beyond the reach of investigation?

The Bible, then, in any sense in which it is ordinarily used, in the language of the Report of the Bible Society and from hundreds of pulpits where our ministers read it,—the Bible in that sense is not and cannot be regarded as the word of God, unless you wish to lay at the charge of the Divine Wisdom and Goodness and Power that which shall impeach his character and take away the reverence of the world for his tender and loving and holy name.

The Bible, then, is not the word of God. Where shall we turn for it now? Is there any word of God? Can we find the word of God? Follow me a little, patiently, in my investigation, and let us see.

There is another claimant, august, antique, full of majesty and power and dominion, that claims to speak for God; and that is the Church. That is, the Catholic Church; for, while the Protestant churches speak of this Book as the word of God, the Catholic Church does not. The Catholic Church, which is the oldest and most wide-spread, does not even think it is a book which it is safe to put into the hands of the common people unless she herself is by, in order to give correct and safe interpretation to its teachings. But this Church claims that it is inspired, and that, therefore, its *ex-cathedra* utterances are the words of God, infallible truth vouchsafed

to man for his salvation. But who can believe this claim? Thousands of people accept it on tradition, and never question it. Those who are under some controlling bias, those who weary of search, have given up thinking and submitted their intellectual nature and integrity to the keeping of another,— these perhaps can accept the stupendous claim. But no intelligent, free man, one who is at all familiar with the facts of the case, can consider it seriously for one moment.

The Church has taught historic and scientific error at every turn; the Church has taught the most serious moral error; the Church has committed itself officially to a hundred positions from which through the advancing intelligence of man it has been driven. So it is demonstrated over and over again, if one cares for demonstration, that the Church is not infallible in its utterances, and that therefore these utterances cannot be the word of God.

This Church committed itself, for example, to false theories concerning the universe, to false theories concerning the origin and nature of man. There is hardly a single step of human progress during the last eighteen hundred years across which, with the threat of eternal misery in its hands, the Church has not strode and attempted to hinder that advance. And this is the power that claims to speak so that its utterances are the word of God. One of the last *ex-cathedra* utterances that we have received from the Vatican, not during the incumbency of the present pope, but that of his predecessor, declared officially and emphatically that all our modern freedom, the wide-spread schooling, culture, and intelligence of the times, our industrial advance,— all the things that make up that which we regard as most hopeful in the modern world,— were godless. On all those things of which we are proud as indicating the possibility of human advance this Church that claims to speak for God has set the seal of its condemnation.

Turning from Book and Church, there is one other place

to which men have been accustomed to turn, as though they could hear the infallible word of God spoken; and that is to the utterances of conscience. People have said, Conscience is the voice of God speaking in the soul, and conscience ever we must obey. Is conscience the voice of God? How does it happen, then, that we find a thousand consciences in bitter and age-long antagonism? Conscience tells one man that he must keep Saturday as a day of rest, another that he must keep Sunday, another that he must keep Friday; and I think, if you travel around the world, you will find almost every day of the week conscientiously observed by some one. Conscience teaches one man that he must attend a particular church, another that he must go to another church. The history of the world is a history of the conflicts and antagonisms of the consciences of men; and the great tragedies that have marked the pathway of human advance have been caused by these conflicting consciences, each of which has claimed that it spoke the infallible truth of God.

Servetus stood, while the fire crisped and blackened his flesh, for conscience' sake. Calvin stood kindling the fire for conscience. Every persecution that the world has ever known has been for conscience; and the men who have been willing to suffer the persecution have been buoyed up and made strong by their conscience. What shall we think, then? We need only a little analysis to make the matter perfectly clear. Conscience does not tell anybody what is right or what is wrong. Conscience is simply a great conviction of Ought, the divine imperative in the human soul that says ever, Do right, do right! But it has no clear story as to what the right is in any particular matter. What is right is a matter to be determined by intelligence in the light of human experience. We find out what is right and what is wrong as simply, as easily, as naturally, as we find out what courses of conduct, what manner of exercise, what foods, what drinks, conduce to the needs of the body. We

find out by trying. So we find out what is good for man in society, as related one to another, by experience. So we find out what method of government is best for any particular people by experience. All these great questions of right or wrong are settled right in here; and, while it is our duty to be true to our conscientious convictions, it is of supremest importance that we should never doggedly and stubbornly hold that we must be right because we happen to think this way or that way about a particular thing to-day. What we call our conscience may be nothing but tradition, may be nothing but prejudice, may be nothing but the result of childhood teaching, nothing but the drinking in of the impressions of the people with whom we have associated. It may have no actual basis in reality whatsoever.

It is the divine voice that tells you to be true, to do right, to do that which is right; but you must find out in the use of your intelligence, in the light of human experience, as to whether a particular course of conduct is right or not.

If the Bible is not, as it stands, the word of God; if the Church has no infallible word to speak to us on behalf of God; if the conscience is not the word of God,— then is there any word of God, and may we ever hope to discover it, to hear it, to read it?

When I was a young man, I read books of exegesis, apologies for beliefs. I noticed that those written on behalf of the Bible almost always began in some such way as this: God, being our father, would certainly reveal himself to us. He would not let us stay in the dark, stumbling along, not knowing whither we were going, risking hopes of everlasting salvation for lack of guidance; and the next step was that the Bible was the one book that had the best claim to being this revelation. And so, having accepted this proposition, the next step was to slough over and make as light as possible all obstacles and objections that stood in the way of accepting the Bible as the best, and so come at last to the conclusion that this must be the revela-

tion which we had a right to expect. I agree with the first proposition I have referred to. God being taken for granted, I believe that we may confidently expect that somewhere there is a word of God for us to listen to and to read. God does not keep silent. God speaks, not in the English language, perhaps, nor the French, nor the Hebrew; but God speaks to his children.

Has he given us an infallible revelation? The revelation of God is infallible just in so far as it is demonstrated truth, no farther. If we had ever so many infallible revelations, they could not be infallible to us unless we were sure that our interpretation of them was infallible. There are words of God by the hundred, by the thousand, in this grand and blessed old Book; and let me say right here in parentheses that not a single word I have said this morning is in criticism of any claim of that Book. Neither the Book nor its writers claim to be infallible. It is only a claim that other people have made concerning the Book. And that claim, as I shall try to make clear to you in a moment, has been a most mischievous and disastrous claim to the world.

That Book, then, contains thousands of the words of God, because it contains thousands of inspired, spiritual, helpful, uplifting, luminous truths; and all truth coming to us, no matter through what source spoken, no matter in what tongue, or falling from whatever lips,— all truth is the word of God. There is, then, the word of God also in many of the deliverances and creeds of the Churches. There are words of God in the conscience. The only trouble is that we have no right to assume that either of these in its totality is the word of God; and therein lie the mischief and the harm.

Let me hint to you now for a moment. I believe that there is nothing in all the world to-day that so stands in the way of the religious progress of man as does the prevailing orthodoxy concerning this book. Why? Demonstrate a truth ever so clearly as one of God's utterances to-day, and

thousands will not accept it. Why? Because there happens to be a text that is not in agreement with it. What is the authority of the texts? Why, the ministers and the New York Bible Society are all the time telling the people that every text in that Book is the word of God. And so, while God is speaking to the nineteenth century, the people dare not listen, because the deliverance is not in accordance with some text handed down to us from two or three thousand years ago, uttered by nobody knows who, nobody knows when, nobody knows where. I say, this fact that people are ready to hurl texts at your head, if you dare to tell them that God is speaking to them to-day, stands in the way of the religious welfare of the nineteenth century more than all the other things put together.

What was the trouble in accepting Darwin? And how does it appear that it was a mark of infidelity for people to accept the teachings of Darwin? Why, merely because the man who compiled certain sentences in the Book of Genesis hadn't heard of what has been discovered only in the last fifty or a hundred years. So it is wicked for the world to learn to-day this magnificent, luminous truth! One text in that Old Testament has murdered thousands on thousands of poor, simple-minded, deluded women. Why? Because an anonymous old Jewish legislator said, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." He didn't tell us what a witch was, and he didn't prove that there was any such thing in the universe; but on the strength of that the world from that day to this has been putting innocent and deluded women to death. A text deified! An ignorant text, an anonymous text, a text growing out of the barbarism of the world!

Only a little while ago in Scotland the ministers and the churches were fighting against the use of ether in cases of child-birth, because some ignorant old Hebrew thought that the pains of child-birth were the penalty for the sin of Eve in the Garden of Eden, and it was wicked to interfere with God's punishments in this way. This is the use to which

texts are put! Go back to the Middle Ages, and it was wicked for anybody to study the constitution and course of nature. Why? Because the minute one began to study he found out facts which did not agree with Old Testament traditions, and therefore it was wicked. Texts again! The worship of the Book!

Now let us consider for a moment. If you wish to find out the constitution of the universe, where would you most reasonably go? Would you go and study what some old Arab or Hindu or Chinaman or African taught five thousand years ago,— some tradition, some guess, some story? Would you go there? Would you think it wise? Now this story which is in the first of Genesis, and which the prophets never heard of, and which didn't come into Jewish thought and life until after the captivity, which was not even original among the Jews, which they borrowed from the Persians and Babylonians,— these texts have stood for the last two thousand years as absolute authority as to the way the universe came into being; and when the people, by means of telescopes and careful scientific observations, attempted to read God's book itself, whose letters are the stars and whose paragraphs are galaxies, they have been told it was wicked, because some old ignorant barbarian thought something else ten thousand years ago.

Here is God speaking, God's own writing, luminous and glorious across the night skies; but it is wicked to read what God himself is saying in the stars

> "Which nightly to the listening earth
> Repeat the story of their birth,"

because texts show that somebody thought something else, but who knew nothing about it.

If you wish to find out how the world was made, where would you go to find out? Here are the facts right under our feet, and geologists at last have begun to turn the strata leaves of rock, and read the records, trace God's

foot-prints, think over his thoughts after him. They go out now into the fields and mountains, and see God at work sculpturing mountains, scooping out the valleys, channelling the rivers,— God's rain, God's frost, God's ice, God's wind, God's storm, God's quiet lapping, loving air,— these at work making the world, making it just as much as it was ever made.

Does it not seem reasonable that here is the place to go to find out how the world was made, instead of going to some ignorant guess of somebody who knew nothing about it, and who never had taken the first step of painful investigation to know? If you wish to find out the facts of biology, the origin and development of life on the earth, will you go to Genesis and see God supposed to say, "Let there be lions": and lions suddenly spring into existence out of nothing, and then the animals tripping before Adam in pairs while he gives them their names? Will you go to a story like that, or to the patient laborers, like the long magnificent roll of scientists who have studied biology, and see the origin and development of the different forms of life?

Here are the words of God,— in the stars, in the earth, in human history, human life. And those that have gotten themselves into books or church creeds, or into the conscience, have only been transcribed fragmentarily from this larger book of God that is being eternally written and is never completed. The word of God is any truth, is every truth which is discovered by the growing intelligence of man.

I wish now at the end to intimate to you that there are certain conditions for our being able to read this book, this word of God, or listen when we are spoken to by the Divine Voice.

In the first place there must be intelligence. And here think for a moment. Oh, it seems so unaccountably strange to me that people should suppose that the early ages of the world held the wisdom of mankind! You go back and you go back to the world's childhood, when they were ignorant

and inexperienced. Facts were all around them; but they had misinterpreted almost every fact they looked at, even, when they dared to face it. It needs intelligence; and the world was never so intelligent as now. Now is the time when the grown-up intelligence of the world is keen to interpret at least some of the most luminous phrases in the word of God.

Another thing is needed,— experience of life. Let me illustrate by referring to Shakspere or the Bible, if you please,— for that matter, to any great book. The boy of twelve reads: he gets a hint or glimmer of a meaning here or there; but the book does not show itself to him. When he is twenty, he reads it again; and he sees new flashes of truth, new hints of deep meanings, but which still, while they lure him on, outrun him at every turn. When he is forty and has tasted the sorrows and struggles of life, has fallen and risen again, has been defeated and has won, then he begins to understand them, because this life experience interprets that which life experience wrote. When he is old, if he keeps his sympathy with all that touches the welfare of human life, then he will read the Bible and he will read Shakspere; and he will read the great masterpieces of the world, and drink of fountains of inspiration and living water the existence of which is made clear to him by this life experience, and could have come to him in no other way.

There is a hint of the profound meaning of this in the story of the young lady who thought she could act. She went to a man in charge of a great theatre, and he heard her read, and said: You are beautiful, you have a fine voice, you are intelligent. You have every thing but one. Go away, spend some years in living, and get your heart broken, and then come back; and you can act. Go through experiences that interpret life; and then you can understand it, and interpret it in your acting.

There is another thing; and this I think you specially need to have your attention called to. To understand cer-

tain things, the culture of certain special faculties is called for. There are a great many people, educated, in the main level-headed, intelligent, and wise, who, when it comes to treating certain special departments of human thought, are anything but wise; and they do not know it. What do I mean? It does not make any difference how much you may know, unless you have certain sympathies, unless you possess certain faculties, unless you have certain tastes, there are certain departments of the world that must be concealed to you. If, for example, you have no musical taste, ordinary intelligence does not help you to understand music. If you have no poetical taste, poetry, which is a delight to the poet, is a sealed book to you. And so in any other departments of human life. These will serve for illustrations.

The point I wish to make here is: We are spiritual beings, and there are spiritual truths in the world. I believe that this universe is athrill with spiritual life and meaning; but, unless the spiritual in you is unfolded and cultivated to some degree, you may never find it out. It speaks; but you do not hear. Your eyes are closed; and your ears are stopped. This is what Paul means in that magnificent Epistle where he says that spiritual things are spiritually discerned. Artistic things are artistically discerned, musical things are musically discerned. So a man may be ever so cultivated, well read; and he may walk through this universe convinced that there is no God, no spirit, that there is no deep meaning in it, and be perfectly honest in that conviction. And I may feel just as certain that he is profoundly mistaken as I would be of the judgment of a blind man in a picture gallery.

You must have faculty in order to hear or read.

And then, last of all, you must have the will,— will to do. You remember the saying of Jesus, one of his most profound utterances to my mind, "If any man will do his will,"— that is, wills to do his will,—"he shall know the doctrine, whether it be of God." There are any quantity of doctrines that are

divine that are rejected by average people, because they do not like them, they do not want them. Go to a man who is engaged in some business which is detrimental to the welfare of the world, or who is conducting it in a way that is not quite straight and fair and honest, but he is getting rich, he is making money rapidly. Do you expect him to hear, to read any word of God that would make it impossible for him to continue in that business? The chances are a thousand to one against it. He will persuade himself that he is going to make a capital use of the money he has dishonestly gained, at any rate. So he will not hear what he is anxious not to hear, and will not see that which cuts across the path of his self-interest.

Take a clergyman who is a minister of a great rich church. I know of just such cases. The path of promotion is open for him, if he stays where he is and keeps quiet. His ambition is appealed to, thousands of money are at his disposal. He persuades himself that he can do no end of good to the world by not going too fast, by not telling people the truth until he is sure that they are quite ready for it; which means, being interpreted, not telling enough truth to make it uncomfortable for himself. Do you not see what a temptation there is here, how difficult it is to hear unless one frankly wills to do the will of his Father?

There is, then, a word of God. It is infallible just so far as we are able to demonstrate its truth. There is no need of its being any more infallible than it is; for we learn to live by experience in religion just as we do in every other department of life. There is this word of God; and we can hear it, we can read it, if only we will cultivate our intelligences, if only we will test it by the experience of life, if only we will cultivate the special faculties to which it appeals, if we will humbly be ready to follow in the path that the word marks out for us.

"God is not dumb, that he should speak no more;
If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness
And find'st not Sinai, 'tis thy soul is poor.
There towers the Mountain of the Voice no less,
Which whoso seeks shall find; but he who bends,
Intent on manna still and mortal ends,
Sees it not, neither hears its thundered lore.

"Slowly the Bible of the race is writ,
And not on paper leaves nor leaves of stone:
Each age, each kindred, adds a verse to it,
Texts of despair or hope, of joy or moan.
While swings the sea, while mists the mountains shroud,
While thunder's surges burst on cliffs of cloud,
Still at the prophet's feet the nations sit."

Dear Father, we believe Thou art speaking to us every day; not a year in which Thou hast not spoken. Thou art speaking now; Thou wilt be speaking to us in the morning. Only let us be ready to hear, to follow; and so Thy kingdom shall come on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

UNITARIAN CATECHISM

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

Price, Paper, per	Copy	. . . . .	20 cents
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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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OUR MISSION AND OUR MISSIONS.

I TAKE as a text two brief passages: first from the eighth chapter and thirty-second verse of John, "The truth shall make you free"; and from the fourteenth chapter and seventh verse of Romans, "None of us liveth to himself."

I am one of those who believe that Unitarianism is providential, one of the divinely appointed forces of the world, that it has a mission, and that, having a mission and being alive, it must have missions. We are not simply disciples, learners of truth. If we play our part as we ought, we are also apostles, those sent, messengers carrying the word of a higher hope.

Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth,"— this is a prophecy, you see,—"and the truth shall make you free." In his profoundest thought, then, truth and freedom go together, the one being the source of the other. And yet is it not a little remarkable that the Unitarian churches are the first body of Christians to exist on the face of the earth, so far as I know, who have dared to be free? I know no other body that has dared to trust itself utterly and simply to the truth, and thus to be free. Every other body of Christians with which I am acquainted is bound, self-bound, to certain statements inherited from a past, the main characteristics of which were limitations of knowledge and a lower type of civilization than that which at present we enjoy.

I am well aware that there are men in the pews by the thousand, in these other churches, who do think freely. I am also well aware that there are ministers by the hundred, possibly by the thousand, who also think freely. But, in so

far as they do, are they quite true to their ordination vows? Are they quite loyal to the standards of the Church whose officers they are and to whose mission they have committed themselves? I bring no railing accusation, but I cannot understand how they can logically or fairly consider themselves free; for freedom means, not flying abroad as far as you please on wings of imagination and investigation, if you are all the time under the necessity of coming back and alighting within certain definite and preordained limits. This is not freedom. Or, if you have gone abroad in your thinking and have not come back, concealing the fact for the peace of the Church,— this is not freedom.

We have dared to be free, because we have felt that in an infinite universe beyond any limits that mind can outline there is forever God, and his truth and his life. Newer facts and conceptions than those of the past have been discovered, and we dare not shut ourselves away from any part of the divine truth or the divine life.

We are free then, not as of right, but because we hold it to be our bounden and most sacred duty; for truth is sacred, and truth only is sacred. A mistake, a misconception, a limitation of knowledge, however venerable, is still only a mistake, a misconception, a limitation. We then are free; and we are committed only to one thing,— to finding the truth, to living the truth, to spreading the truth, to helping organize the truth of God into the growing life of the world.

Our first mission, then, is this of the truth-seeker and the truth-proclaimer; and, since we, as I have said, so far as I know, are the only body of Christian churches in the world that dare thus to be free, we have a mission to the world's intellectual leaders. Thousands of these have, as they suppose, outgrown the limits, not only of the Church, which they *have* outgrown, but of religion as well. It is our mission to show them that religion is something that cannot be outgrown, that it only becomes grander when freely growing

and clothed in the fairer colors of truth, woven no matter in what nation or under whatever name.

We then, as no other body of Christians in the world, are fitted to be the religious leaders of the world's intellectual leaders; and I believe that this is our first mission, beyond that of seeking simply God's truth.

I hear it said a great many times that Unitarianism is specially adapted to the masses, to the common, plain people, because it is simple, because it is easily apprehended; and I have heard the wonder expressed over and over again that it does not sweep the country because of this supposed adaptation. I have never agreed with this thought. For, if you will note a little carefully, simplicity of thought, simplicity of statement, simplicity of manner, simplicity of dress, simplicity in art, simplicity in literature,— simplicity anywhere,— is the result, and one of the last results, of the highest thought and cultivation. It is not simplicity that the mass of the uneducated people of the world desire: rather is it the farthest and most striking departures from simplicity that appeal to these. A man must have learned to think, a man must have cultivated independence of character, so that he is able to stand alone, if need be, for what he thinks, before he is fitted to be a Unitarian.

If you accept without question the traditional ideas of the religious life, all you need to do to make some new form of this life sweep the country is to kindle the flame; the material is already at your hand. But the Unitarian position demands a new thought about the world and about God, and about man and about duty and about destiny; and people must learn to think, and, as I said, must learn to be able to stand for what they think, as the result of a personal conviction, before they can be good Unitarians.

Our mission, then, is first, to those that do think, have thought, and to those perhaps who, as the result of not carrying their thought far enough, imagine that they have left religion behind.

Another point I must notice, closely akin to this and yet distinct enough so that I need to set it apart a little by itself. We have a task assigned to us, one of the grandest and most magnificent of all the world,— a task that the other churches cannot consistently and logically enter upon; for, just in so far as they do enter upon it, they cease to be true and loyal to the standards which they have sworn to defend and uphold. What do I mean? I mean this, which in one form or another you have heard me give expression to more than once: I mean that a grand new revelation of God has come to this modern world. The old universe has passed away. The old thought of the origin and nature of man has passed away,— passed, I mean, from free and intelligent minds. The old thought of destiny, of salvation, has passed away, or is rapidly being left behind.

In other words, the theology of Christendom, as it has been handed down to us for the last thousand years, sprung out of certain definite conceptions of the universe and of God and of man; and, to the growing intelligence of the modern world, this new revelation that is coming to man is displacing these conceptions. And the work most needed to-day is the reorganization, the reconstruction of theological thought, in order to bring it into accord with that which is the demonstrated truth of our Father in heaven; for only thus can religion itself be saved as the practical possession of the common people of the world. And this great work of intellectual reconstruction, of teaching the new truth about God and the universe, and man and destiny,— this is another phase of the mission of the Unitarian churches.

As I said a moment ago,— let me emphasize it by a brief reiteration,— this is our work and ours alone, because we are free, because we are not only not disloyal to our past in undertaking it, but because only by undertaking it can we be really and truly loyal.

Another thing which constitutes a part of our great mission: There are thousands of people in the old-time churches

all over the country and all over the world who are growing more and more dissatisfied. They are troubled, they are thinking, they are questioning. As Oliver Wendell Holmes has said somewhere,— I quote his idea, not his words,— this free thought and these new ideas are in the air; and people must shut themselves away from the common intellectual air of the world if they do not wish to catch the infection.

These new thoughts are in magazines, are in newspapers. No matter if they be only attacked, if they be only ridiculed; that calls attention to them. They are, then, in all the air. The new universe is creeping into the consciousness of men. It is a slow process. You know it took the world two or three hundred years to get rid of the Ptolemaic thought of the universe, and become accustomed to the Copernican; and even now we talk in Ptolemaic phrases,— we speak of the sun's rising and setting still, which is only a fragment of the old Ptolemaic idea. So we need not wonder if it takes time for these new thoughts to filter down through and color the common thinking of common men and women. But the new universe is coming upon us; and in the new conception, God is not away off in the heavens; He is here,—the thrilling life and soul and body and hope and uplift and growth of the universe and man. This is coming. And so the new thought about the origin and nature of man, that he is not any longer a fallen being and under God's wrath, but a rising being, and led by God's love, whether he knows it or not,— all these ideas are coming into the world. People are shrinking from the doctrines of Calvinism that they used to accept — that men are foreordained to be saved and to be lost — as passing phases of the old beliefs, and not to be accepted in the light of to-day.

All these things people are revolting from; and so in the pews everywhere people are beginning to question this point of the old theology or that. They are beginning to wonder whether they ought to stay where they are, and yet they are afraid to go. Why? Because they know, whatever

may be the defects of their thinking, that this religious life in them, the consciousness of God, and that they are God's children,— that this is the dearest possession of the world; and they wonder whether, if they give up the religious thinking they have been accustomed to, they are going to lose this. At any rate, they are afraid that they may lose it. And this, they feel, is life; and they are right in that feeling. Rather than lose that, I would have them stay forever in the old: only I believe that it is safe to follow God, and that there is no loss possible in following him.

I believe that it is our great mission to prove to the world that we can keep our reverence and our love and our trust and our hope without doing injustice to our brains. I believe that God's true church is big enough to hold heart and brains, too, and that there is no reason for leaving either of them at the door when we enter. It is our business to teach the world that.

This is one part of our magnificent mission,— to teach in our teaching, and illustrate in our lives, the permanence and the sacredness of reverence and worship and tenderness and trust and hope, all the sweet sacrednesses that have associated themselves with the religious life of the past. For these belong to religion; and we do think that that is religious thought which gets rid of a partial, jealous, cruel God, and gets rid of a revengeful, eternal, useless hell. All these finer and sweeter things that we love and that go under the name of religion shall bloom in the light and summer fragrance of this new revelation and in the free air and under the sunshine of the eternal love. It is our business, our mission to the world, to teach and illustrate that great truth, so we can offer to these discontented ones, who can no longer honestly stay in the old belief, a religious home, religious opportunity to live and to work, so that they shall feel that they have lost nothing by hearing the voice of God and going out at his bidding.

And there is one other class of people to whom, as I

believe, we have a special mission. I hope Mr. Moody was not correct in his statistics to which I referred some Sundays ago. He has told us, if the newspapers have reported him correctly, that out of the seventy millions of people in this country not more than thirty millions ever go to any church. I hope that is not true. But, if it is, here is more than one-half of the population of the land that the old-time churches, for one reason or another, do not reach. Many of them have gone away from those churches because the teachings seemed to them unreasonable, because the God preached seemed cruel and unjust, because there seemed no hope for man. They have thrown off the mental shackles, they have revolted against the moral cruelty. There is no hope of getting them back into these associations which they have left.

If they are to be religious at all, we must give them a new thought about religion. I take it, and this statement is based upon such experience as I have had with this kind of men, that they are not glad to lose their belief in God; they are not glad to give up the hope of immortal life; they have gone out because it seemed to them honest and manly, even at the cost of surrendering precious hopes. They have ceased to believe in God, because, as they have looked over human society, they could not accept the kind of universe they discovered, or thought they discovered, as the work of a wise and loving God. They are troubled about the dark places of the earth; they are troubled by the limitations, the inequalities, the pains, the sorrows and the wrongs; and they say that they cannot find any adequate reason for believing that there is that in us which smiles at death and passes through death as through a cloud that touches us not; and so they are "without God and without hope in the world," in this true and divine sense.

And this is our great mission, something that ought to appeal to our enthusiastic devotion, to go to these wandering, unfed thousands, and tell them about God, our Father, our

trust, our hope, and see if we cannot find them a place to stand, a little work to do, and an outlook that has in it something of cheer.

These three or four points I suggest to you as making up a part of what I regard as the peculiar and superb mission of Unitarianism.

Now I must converse with you for a little while in regard to the second part of our theme,— our mission so far, now our missions.

The old-time religions were not missionary. Religion was something that pertained to the family. The stranger had no right to intermeddle: it was an impertinence and an intrusion for an outsider to be present. It pertained to the family, then to the tribe, then to the city or the nation. But, as the world grew, and there came into the mind of man some foregleam of the magnificent idea that we are all of one blood, then there dawned on human consciousness the conception of world-wide religion. So the greatest religions of the world, three or four of them, are missionary religions; and the first one of them all was Buddhism. The next was Judaism, then came Mahommedanism, and then Christianity. These four — if we consider Judaism and Christianity as separate — are the only missionary religions of the world; and these all believe in the unity and the brotherhood of the human race, and all of them except Buddhism believe in the divine fatherhood. And so, as I said, these are missionary religions.

Does it not appeal to you, this idea,— that, if you have something that is worth anything, a view, a truth, an inspiration, a hope, it is worth handing to somebody else? If your religion is not worth giving away, it is not worth your keeping. And this is one of those things that increases by dispensing it. The more love you give away, the more tenderness you give away, the more pity, the more sympathy, the more help, the more truth-teaching, the more hope, the more of them all you have. So that, if I find a man

who does not care whether his neighbor shares his great beliefs and hopes and inspirations with him, then I have little respect for his convictions. I do not believe he has anything which he values much unless he is impelled by the generosity of his soul to share it with his fellows.

If our Unitarianism, then, is worth anything, we shall wish to do what we can to give it away. Organized Unitarianism in this country is very young. There is to-day no organization that can try a man for heresy: our organizations are only working organizations, that is all.

In the year 1825 the American Unitarian Association was formed. Before that the leaders and fathers had opposed an organization because they did not wish to form another sect: they only wished to fight out the battle of liberty in the churches where they were. But their liberty was not allowed in the old churches; and they were forced out, and so became, in that sense, a sect, whether they would or not. And then some noble men determined that there should be a missionary organization,— an organization which should be the missionary arm of the churches. It has no ruling power over the churches: it is simply our servant. It was organized, I say, in 1825. I wish to read to you three or four words which show the purpose for which it was then organized.

"First, to collect and diffuse information respecting the state of Unitarian Christianity in our country.

"Second, to produce union, sympathy, and co-operation among liberal Christians.

"Third, to publish and distribute books and tracts inculcating the correct views of religion in such form and at such price as shall afford all an opportunity to become acquainted with Christian truth.

"Fourth, to supply missionaries, especially in such parts of our own country as are destitute of a stated ministry.

"Fifth, to adopt whatever other measures as may hereafter seem expedient,— such as contributions in behalf of clergymen with insufficient salaries or in aid of building churches."

That, then, is what the Unitarian organization meant in 1825. It has broadened and increased its work since then; and yet it is crippled every year of its life simply for lack of means.

I wish now to give you a few specimens of the lines in which it is carrying on its work, and see if it appeals to you, and see if you care to do anything to help them,— help them and help us; for they are simply our agency.

In the first place, one principal part of the practical missionary work in which we are concerned is the publication and distribution of tracts and sermons,— such tracts and sermons as are considered clear statements of the new views of the universe and God and man, and duty and destiny, for which we stand. These are published by the thousand, and scattered freely all over the land. There are certain ministers who are publishing sermons once or twice a month or oftener,— men like Mr. Chadwick in Brooklyn, Joseph May in Philadelphia, Dr. Ames and Dr. Hale in Boston, like Mr. Crothers in Cambridge, like Mr. Jones and others in the West. And these sermons, through what are called the Church Door and the Post-office Missions, along with tracts on all these various subjects, are scattered, as I said, all over the country. And there is one peculiar and very interesting phase of this work. These sermons, for example, visit people who have no other point of contact with our thought and life. I know of cases out in Nebraska where a sermon goes to one household. Perhaps they are ten miles away from another family who would look at it if they had it. It is read there, and sent on to the next house, and the next, and covers, perhaps, half a State, until it is all worn out. So these messengers of the new truth and hope are travelling in this way through the West and through the South.

Then another thing. There are places where there are six or ten or fifteen people in a little village or town, where there is no church that represents their new thought, and

where they are not strong enough to have one. These people gather together, and organize a little church service. They sing hymns, they read the Scriptures, somebody repeats a prayer, and a sermon is read. And so a little church service is held. There are hundreds, thousands, of places like this over the country.

Then there is another phase of our work. There are poor old churches, mainly throughout New England, that have been drained of their once vigorous life. Shall we let them die? For example, there is the old Pilgrim Church at Plymouth. Of course, most of the strong and vigorous young men of Plymouth do not settle down at home. They go to Boston, then come to New York; they go to Chicago, to Hawaii, to Alaska,—all over the world. These young men are the vigor, the soul, the life, of enterprises all over the country and all over modern civilization. The old churches taught and trained them; and sometimes these old churches need care, just as our fathers needed care when they were too old to take care of themselves. Shall we let them die? No. Because other boys like these that are gone out are being born and growing up there still in these old churches. And so it is a part of our Unitarian Association work to nourish and help and keep alive these venerable sources of our life, our love, our worship, and our hope.

And then there is another phase of our missionary work. As you will readily understand, all over this country there are towns where there is reading and thinking going on. There are a few people who are ready to welcome our new faith. There are parts of the country where the word "Unitarianism" would probably not be even understood, and where its grandest statements of religious truth are looked upon as mere blasphemy, merely because they are not in accord with the old-time traditions and theories. But in these places there are a few who are ready to think; and in any number of these places there are enough so that they are ready to organize a little church, provided they can have

some help. They are not strong enough yet to go alone. They must be nourished. They must have some one sent to them as a teacher; and until they grow strong enough to support him, a part of that support must be assured them; and in this way churches are growing up all over the country.

But, do you not see, this kind of growth is limited,— limited seriously for lack of means. There are in this State of New York to-day certain places where Unitarian churches are fairly begging and pleading to be born; but our missionary organizations are not rich enough to buy swaddling-clothes or a cradle for them. And so we tell them to wait, when perhaps another year the people who understand the situation will be more generous: perhaps in another year the people will learn to care more, and will give us the means to help them on to their feet. This kind of thing is going on all over the country and all the time. There is not a town in this country of five thousand people where a little Unitarian church might not be organized within two years if we had the money.

I am not a good beggar: I would starve rather than beg for myself. I am not begging now. I am telling you, as clearly and simply as I can, the magnificent opportunities that wait for you to help God, help men out of the old into the new, into a higher and simpler and sweeter and nobler life. If it appeals to you, help. That is the extent of my begging.

There is another phase of our work which needs at least brief attention. There are college towns all over the country, such as Ann Arbor in Michigan, Madison in Wisconsin, Ithaca in New York, where perhaps we might organize a little feeble Unitarian church, and let it grow large in ten or fifteen or twenty years, but where we need to do a different kind of work, where we need to have a strong man. Why? Because there are thousands of students assembling there from all over the State; and we need a man who in the

presence of that young and growing life can teach the new truth intelligently and persuasively, so that these students, coming in contact with it, may learn what it means, and may carry back home with them its results into their life-work, wherever they may be.

There is little use in trying to do anything new with a man after he is fifty,— that you know. A famous old professor at Harvard used to say, It is no use to argue with a man after he is sixty years old. I think you can put the limit nearer his youth than that. Very few people reconstruct their ideas after forty; but young men in the ferment of their studies and in contact with their new life can be wrought over into nobler and higher ideas, and fitted for a grander destiny.

And so we plant in these college towns churches,— and it takes a large amount of money to keep them running,— to put there one of our abler men,— one competent to fill a position of responsibility like that.

Now these, friends, indicate to you in some brief fashion the kind of work that we are undertaking to do, the kind of work that the American Unitarian Association stands for. It indicates to you a little the thing I had in mind in sending out the circular which you will receive during the coming week. Now what shall we do about it? In my pleading, do not for a moment misunderstand my attitude towards Unitarians. I do not believe that there are any men or women on the face of the earth more generous, more munificent givers than they. But there is one peculiarity of their giving which I would change if I might. Let me instance a case as illustrating what I mean.

Two boys grew up in a certain town in New England, and went away and became successful business men. One of them, as he became old, in recognition and gratitude, built a magnificent church in his native village. The other one built a magnificent public library; and the church, the Unitarian church is feeble and struggling and poor, and has difficulty in keeping alive.

Now have I anything to say against the giving of a public library,— for you probably guess that that was given by the Unitarian; and the church was given, in this particular instance, by an Episcopalian,— have I anything to say against giving the public library? No. Unitarians, as I have said, have given magnificently. Through some sort of fear of being regarded as narrow, being regarded as sectarian, being regarded as illiberal, they are giving broadcast all over the land to everything, and sometimes a good deal more than they give to the support of their own special and peculiar religious ideas.

I have no fault to find with this generous and wide-spread giving; except this. If somebody comes to you representing one of the old-time churches or a young men's Christian association, or something of that sort, and asks for money, before you give it to him, will you ask him this question: In the case of the young men's Christian association, will you ask him if any Unitarian is ever admitted to hold any position in the body? If they are willing to do anything for you or with you, except take your money? Will you put another question before you give,— if they would give to help build a Unitarian church if you appealed to them? Ninety-nine times in a hundred they would refuse absolutely to give a cent.

And yet you are accustomed to be liberal enough to give to the building of things that you do not believe in. Give, if you will, to all the world; but give to the things that are vital,— to the life of God in your soul first. And remember these streams that we talk about as liberality, and that flow all over the world,— these have their fountain-head in the liberal ideas for which our Unitarian Church stands. Here is the spring from which these streams flow. If you let the fountain-head dry up, then the wide-spread and beneficent results also must suffer. If I were worth fifty millions of money to-day, I would not give to any religious institution that would not reciprocate and give a little something to

that which I believe in, too. If they would be generous enough to let the generosity go all round, well and good. But I appeal to you, first, to give for those great things in which lie the hope of the future.

Be generous, then, in helping on the life of this great religious movement which holds the future in its hands. Think a little as to whether you have ever sacrificed in your giving. Is there any person here who has ever given enough, so that he has gone without anything on account of it? There may be many. If there are any, I would like to make the personal acquaintance of such a person. Think a little carefully. Remember, this is an appeal for the year, that covers our missionary and charitable work for the one whole year.

Think carefully then; and, as God has given you ability, give back to Him through the service of his children in helping on the divine life, in which lie all the beauty and glory of this present world as well as the eternal future.

Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast given us the privilege of helping Thee. Let us remember that it is the divinest thing vouchsafed to us. Let us then share with Thee that work, Thy giving, in consecrating ourselves to Thy service and the service of Thy children. Amen.

UNITARIAN CATECHISM

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

Price, Paper, per	Copy	. . . . .	20 cents
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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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The Song and Sacrament of Thanksgiving

BY

REV. ROBERT COLLYER

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THE SONG AND SACRAMENT OF THANKSGIVING.

"The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

"Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing."— PSALM cxlv. 15, 16.

WHEN we note the splendid part hunger has played in the world's whole life, we have to wonder where our world would have been in this year of our Lord but for its matchless energy. The hunger you can trace in nature from the film of moss on the millstone grit to the redwoods on the Pacific slope, from the living things the microscope reveals that find forests and savannas in some small plant set on the window-sill in your living-room to the great beasts which roam through the forests of Africa or India, and from the mere hunger-sack, and no more, in the things which lie at the base line of life to the saints who hunger after the fulness of God. Nor can we fail to note, again, how ruthless and masterful this hunger seems to be wherever we turn toward life in its rudest forms, full only of the grossest greed to have and to hold, but how it blooms forth, when we come up higher, into a finer worth or a promise of worth, like that of the buds and blossoms on the trees, which are not alone good in themselves, but are heaven's sign manual for fruit and timber in the fulness of time. So this torment of desire, which lies in the mere hunger-sack at the one extreme, touches the beatitude "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness" at the other, and finds room within the vast spaces we are glancing at for the serpent and the saint, the destroyer and the saver, the lion and the lamb,

for the eagle and the dove, the hawk and the sparrow, the early bird and the worm, with the great whale as Father Taylor thought of him and the wagonload of herrings provided for his breakfast.

And so, make what we will of this primal power and potency, here is the first grand factor of our world's swarming and measureless life,— the world of the pessimist at the one extreme and of the optimist at the other, the man who says there could not be a worse world and the man who says there could not be a better,— because our life and all life lies within the clasp of His eternal providence who ruleth in the heavens and on the earth, and stands forever true to the words I read just now: "The eyes of all wait upon thee. Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." A heaven on the earth in the germ, if no more,— to one man holding in its heart the promise of the heaven we hope for, but a hell on the earth to another. As our disheartened brother in this city says, A hell on the earth, shooting forth infernal fires, with evil spirits incarnate swarming here and everywhere and holding the mastery. Here we touch the shadow or the light, as we may or must walk in the one or in the other; but this is a hungry world, let us try to solve the problem how we will.

The film of moss over which I was bending this summer on the moor in my motherland, as I was bending fifty years ago, was still there, and true to the law which compels it to strike those teeth into the millstone grit, and hold those tiny cups upward to catch the sunshine and shadow, the rain and the dew. The creatures I heard then chirping in the grass were chirping still, and the birds were singing for me their half-forgotten song. The bees were busy down in the cups of the flowers; and the wild things were running from cover to cover, hungry or satisfied. For when He, the Eternal One, said, Let there be life, He said, Let there be hunger; and so all things which have life answer to the law.

It is a hungry world, therefore, that waits on our Thanksgiving, and shares our joy in the great Provider; and so let who will say, "The melancholy days have come, the saddest of the year," as this time draws near, I can never find room in my heart to join in the threnody, because to me they are not the saddest, but the gladdest, of the year. In the spring the great mother earth wakes to welcome the returning sun; but the winter dies hard on our zone, and we are apt to imagine there will be no spring worth the name. The summer steals in; but the green things growing have to fight a stern battle for their life, and life's worth. It is too dry: the fair promise of the year will wither. It is too wet: the harvest will rot. The blight is on the berry, the sting is in the plum. The apple is shaken down in the strong winds. The roots of our planting are at the mercy of the hungry things that burrow and devour. Mildew is in the air: the farmer fears for his wheat. The corn was late in the planting, and he counts the days before he may look for the first frosts.

But the autumn comes, when the great banners flame forth, blent of gold and crimson; and the flowers in the gardens seem like cups of azure and fire, holding all the glory of the summer in their heart. The barns bulge with the plenty, and His word has come true once more: I will feed thee with the finest of the wheat. He hath watered the hills from His chambers. The earth is satisfied with the bounty from His hand. Fire and hail, snow and vapor and the stormy winds, have fulfilled His word. The divine Husbandman has wrought with the human, stroke for stroke. This mother earth has swung through her orbit on no forlorn adventure. The wind, blowing where it listeth, was the breath of the Most High. Let the mother seem to fall on sleep, then: she has done nobly, and earned her rest. There will be no complaining in our streets which cannot be stayed by the abundance poured forth from His hand of whom are all things, and we in Him. And so this is

no threnody: it is the psalm of a great and beautiful consummation, and we are here to join in the psalm.

The fable says the wild things of the world called a conference once, in which the question was mooted, Which is the worst trouble we have to face and fight? It is hunger, one said; and one, it is fear; and another, it is anger. Then a wise old hermit who lived among them, and knew their speech, said, It is your temper and disposition which breeds and nourishes the whole brood of your complaints. I would nourish the spirit and temper, then, which brings forth thanksgiving, and girdle the whole year — the spring and summer, the autumn and the winter — to meet and tie in a love-knot when this great good day comes round; and beware of the spirit and temper which would turn all the days into tenter-hooks on which to hang my complaints. I would hold this for a primal and essential truth: that this poor old mother earth — as we may be ready to call her when the black spot is in our eyes — was never so full of a fair promise as she is to-day, that our home is no poor house, falling to decay, but a palace, rather, in the building; and not a desert

> "Where prickly thorns through all the ground
> With mortal poisons grow,
> And all the rivers that are found
> With dangerous waters flow,"

as they taught me to sing in my childhood,— not this, but a garden of the Lord in the making,— and so would mind the word of the good old bishop: "Serve God, and be cheerful."

It is a hungry world; but once more the year is crowned with a matchless harvest, to which the Lord of the harvest bids the whole world welcome, now that He has spread the table.

In a journal printed when our century was newly born, and in the motherland, the writer says, "We have a poor harvest again, but we hear it is large and ample in the

United States; and so we shall be able to bring what we need from there." It is the first note I can find in the song of the greater thanksgiving, the first rivulet of this river the streams whereof make glad millions of homes where, but for its blessed overflow, the mothers would weep when the children cry for bread and they have none to give them,— the great Gulf Stream which flows now round the world, and crowns the day with a song for them, as for you and me.

Once more in this summer I have gone through the markets in one great city in England, where the house-mother goes to lay out the week's income, where a penny less in the pound of the food she must buy means enough and something over, and a penny more not quite enough for the household of good and generous fare; and there was a song in my heart of thanksgiving, as I would note how the vast overflow from our fruitful land was giving them the greater pennyworth, sending them home thinking of the good Sunday's dinner and the ample provision for the week. They sit with us at the Lord's table, the Lord's supper. The poor are our guests, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, and from the highways and hedges. It is a hungry world, and we can stay the hunger from the measureless abundance.

But once more in these times of the abundance of bread won from the earth by His grace of whom are all things, and we in Him, we must beware how we eat and drink to our own damnation in the great human sacrament, or turn the vast abundance to base and vile uses in the service of the great god Mammon.

The canon was not to be questioned in the home from which I came, that we must never waste a fragment of bread. In the direst times there must still be something to spare for the blind man and the cripple at the gate; and then we might give the remnants to the birds, but no crumb should be wasted or destroyed. It was the good home law, and

true to the thought I nourish that all bread is holy, so that it be sound and good, when I take the account of what the loaf on my table has cost the Lord of the harvest and the man.

It is baken of the wheat, we say, which has ripened for the harvest in this splendid summer; but no, is the answer, the wheat has ripened through the untold ages for our Thanksgiving in this year of our Lord. The loaf we shall see on our table presently, reaches backward to the morning tide of the creation, and holds in its heart the secret of the primordial fires. The measureless cycles of a time before time was, for our human kind, lies in that loaf of bread, and the advance and recession of the seas, with the storms that would make the worst we have ever seen seem like the zephyrs of a summer's day, and the earthquakes that lifted the Andes and the Alps high in the heavens.

Evolution lies in my loaf of bread, and the unfolding of God's holy purpose. In the prophet's word, "I will hear the heavens, saith the Lord, and the heavens shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn and wine and oil, and they shall hear my people." Do we ever think, again, that the bread we break for holy uses or mere waste has cost myriads of human lives in its perfecting, how the manhood from which we hail must win the treasure from the wild earth and the austere heavens, and pay for it at prime cost, as we pay for all things we count the noblest and the best,— the manhood which must go out pioneering to dwell between hope and frustration, to be instant in season and out of season, and then die, not having received the promise, but seeing it afar off, God having reserved the better thing for us? For, as all the streams run to the rivers, and all the rivers to the seas, so by His help and the good human striving, and through the ages we cannot number, comes the untold wealth of this year; while the words of our good Jeremy Taylor are stamped on my loaf,— "The laborer on the land is also a servant of the Most High."

Therefore, in the old motherland, when the last load of ripe grain was brought home in a time I remember, and the most splendid sheaf stood above all as the great jewel stands on the royal crown, the good yeoman would make a feast where all who had wrought with him in the harvest were as one family; and no man would sit below the salt who had proven himself well worth his salt in the sheaving, or any man or woman be left out who had done the good day's work. They were all made welcome on that day. The fine old custom is dying out, they tell me, and more's the pity; for here was the rude germ of the human sacrament at the Lord's table. And still in the north,— the cradle of our manhood,— when the harvest is gathered in, the good man of the farmstead says, This is not alone for me and mine.

So he goes forth from his barns with one ample sheaf, and gives that to the birds who have nested under the eaves of his home, not now counting against them what they have stolen for tithe already, because, it may be, he says in his heart, How under the wide heavens can a bird steal? He will be to them in God's stead on that day, and in his measure make good the song: "The eyes of all wait upon thee. Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing."

Or, again, on this day shall we ask the fathers and founders of our Thanksgiving what heart of grace they brought to the day, the story is written in their book of life. There were times, as the day drew near, when the harvests had only spindled into a sort of make-believe on the land, and the fruit had withered in the blossom or fallen untimely from the trees; when the fish had gone southward far away, or the storms had smitten the homesteads and the boats; when the store in the larder was pitiful to see, the wolf was at the door, and the savage was in the woods, watching for his chance to slay. It made small matter to that royal manhood and womanhood, when the great good

day came round. They must hold their festival all the same, sing their psalms, hear the Word, and then go home and sit about the tables. They had a deep and sure faith in God and in His eternal providence, no matter what might befall. The song as yet unsung was in their hearts:

> "Ill that God blesses is our good,
> And unblest good is ill;
> And all is right that seems most wrong,
> If it be His dear will."

So, as I read the story, the tears are in my eyes; and I say, Where else in all the world shall we find such a manhood and womanhood as that down on the bay in the birth-time and cradle of the nation's life?

This word, once more, touching the holy bread and the great human communion — half parable, if you will, and half the simplest verity — would miss my fair purpose, should I fail to dwell some moments on two more which press for utterance this morning. I said we must beware how we eat and drink to our own condemnation; and, if the story I have touched be true, is not this also true,— that, while there is no nation on the earth so blessed with abundance of bread, so filled with the finest of the wheat, is there any nation so wasteful or reckless, in the waste of which we ourselves are the real witnesses, else we might demur and plead not guilty?

I must not be suspected for a moment of any disposition to sniff and snarl on this day of all days; for it is an axiom to me that what we call good living is one important factor in a good life, if we mind well our grace *before* and *in* and *after* the meat, while I confess my sympathy for the simple-hearted woman I heard of, who had attained to a good old age, and, when the minister asked her to name some one thing she counted among the choicest blessings of the many years, answered promptly, "Good vittles." So do I, when I remember the hunger-bitten and hapless poor in my mother-

land before the repeal of the Corn Laws and the advent of the great loaf, together with the vast bounty we send over now, of which I have spoken; and, again, when I remember how all these years ago I was fain to tear out the roots and tendrils of my own life and come to this New World, so that I might find abundance of bread and many a boon beside, to find them in a fulness beyond all my dreams. Nor would I forget this day how generous we have been to those who were perishing with hunger in other lands, pouring out from our store without stint or stay, down to this morning; while still I think it is true that we waste more than we give, and so affront the blessed bounty of earth and heaven in the holy bread.

Nor must we forget one thing done this year, not by the nation,— God forbid! — but by citizens of the republic, which came home to my own heart with a cruel impact. In Italy there is a poverty sadder and more hopeless than any I have seen in my many years. The laboring man on the land can earn only what would be about nineteen cents a day by our tenor; and in the cities he is in no better case, while the Church ordains no end of what she calls holy days — unholy I should call them — the poor creatures must observe on peril of their souls,— days that shrive a great slice from this poor pittance of bread, which is most literally the staff of his life,— that and some poor mushy mixture of meal. So, when the price of the loaf rises beyond a certain line, that means for tens of thousands starvation.

The alarm was sounded in the morning paper, when we came to Gibraltar in the spring, the loaf was rising beyond the line, and there would be trouble in Italy. When we came to Naples, the starving thousands had risen in revolt for dear life. They rose from Naples to Milan, the cities swarmed with soldiers, they were on guard at the stations as I went along the peninsula; and I was told by eye-witnesses that the poor creatures were shot down like mad

dogs, while to-day the prisons are crowded with those who took part in the revolt. They were mad, God help them! It was hunger-madness. How did this come to pass, and where lies the blame? With the government, we say, and the priesthood, first of all; and that, no doubt, is true. But is not this true, also, that one man or more, in the service of the great god Mammon, saw their chance out yonder in Chicago to corner the wheat, as we say, dam back the stream, and clutch their millions? The result was the rise of the loaf in Italy and the fight of the hunger-bitten multitudes for their life. The rumor was that a thousand were slain in Milan; but, when I came there, the tragedy was ended, and they were buried in level graves. The spark for the fire lay in Chicago. The farmers in the West were rejoicing over the rise in wheat. In Italy there was mourning and lamentation, while it would be no consolation, if the tidings reached them, that the awful hand had flashed out, and shaken the millions out of their clutch who stood within the plot with their God; but I confess to a whole-hearted thanksgiving when I read the good news. They had robbed the poor of their bread. They had eaten and drunken to their own damnation.

On the great events of the year and those still impending I have no time and no wish to dwell; nor can I fear touching the future, because in these forty-eight years I have learned to trust those our good Father Abraham loved to call the plain people, and to believe in the republic with my whole heart.

A noble woman in this city said many years ago: "I have lost the power to look only on the surface. All things now seem to come out of the Infinite and to be filled with the Infinite." And so it seems to me in these last years. And the Infinite is present in the holy bread. So we must beware of wasting, while still we are generous with these good gifts of heaven and the earth, in the faith that, if we are true to our trust, the year can never come when we shall not meet to

hold Thanksgiving, and not alone for the bread that perisheth, but for that which cometh down from heaven, while we work with Him, the Infinite and Eternal One, that his Commonwealth may come, and His will be done on the earth as it is done in heaven, and sing our home-made psalm: —

"We see our Father's hand once more
Reverse for us the plenteous horn
Of autumn, filled and running o'er
With fruit and flowers and golden corn.
Our common mother rests and sings,
Like Ruth, among the garnered sheaves.
Her lap is full of goodly things,
Her brow is bright with autumn leaves.
O blessings every year made new!
O gifts in rain and sunshine sent!
The bounty overruns the due,
The fulness shames our discontent!"

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BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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MESSIAH PULPIT

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SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

VOL. III. DECEMBER 9, 1898. No. 10.

MY LIFE'S MEANING

GEO. H. ELLIS
141 FRANKLIN STREET, BOSTON
104 E. 20TH STREET, NEW YORK
1898

Entered at the Post-office, Boston, Mass., as second-class mail matter

NOTE.

The big storm disarranged Dr. Savage's plans for last Sunday. He was to have begun his series on Immortality, which will now commence December 11. He takes occasion of this interruption to republish a sermon long out of print.

MY LIFE'S MEANING.

I REMEMBER a story told of a conversation between the Duke of Wellington and a young man who had been stationed as a missionary at some far-off point, and, having become somewhat discouraged, had returned. The duke asked why he had come home. "Do you not believe," asked the duke, "that it is a part of the purpose of God to bring all the world to the knowledge of the truth?" The young man replied that of course he did. "Do you not believe," said the duke, "that you could do something to further that plan by remaining where you have been stationed?" He replied that of course he did. "Then," said the duke, "go back to your post, and stay there until you receive authoritative orders to occupy some other position."

It would be very easy, I suppose, for all of us to do that, if we could really believe that somebody, with the adequate wisdom, the adequate power, the adequate love, had put us somewhere and had told us to stay. That which makes it hard is the doubt that insinuates itself into so many minds in the modern world as to whether there is any special meaning in my life or in yours, as to whether there is any particular object to be gained, anything to make it worth while for us to endure hardness like good soldiers. And it is,— there is no use in disguising it,— it is more difficult to-day for us to believe this than it was for people to believe it a hundred or two hundred or five hundred years ago. I have had occasion to refresh your memory with what you all know,— as to how diminutive a thing the universe was then as compared with our present conception of it. In a small world, with God close by,— a world over which God's angels were habitually passing and returning, like ministers

of the king, keeping oversight of this and of that; in a little world where we could believe that we were really under the eye of a great Being, who had made us and had placed us where we were and who had appointed us a perfectly definite thing to do,— in a world like that, I say, so small, so comprehensible, it was a comparatively easy thing for people to believe that their little selves were really part of a divine plan, and that it was important for them to stick to the post to which they had been assigned until they received authoritative orders to occupy some other position.

It is harder to believe it now, because the universe seems so vast, and because the old heaven, just beyond the blue, has faded away, and there is found no place for it, because we cannot think of God as present in the old sense,— as an outlined being, sitting somewhere, issuing orders, telling us what we are to do, offering us rewards for doing, or threatening us with penalties if we are faithless. All this definite picture has dissolved like morning mist; and we look this way and that, and wonder where God is, if he is anywhere. We wonder if he really finds time, in the midst of his infinite occupations, even to remember that we exist, much more to care whether we are doing this thing or doing that. Whether he *does* care, whether he knows, whether he thinks of you and me, we must find out in the first place, or come to the holding of a general theory, at any rate, by considering for a little a larger problem.

Have we any right to think there is a purpose, a meaning, in the universe at all? That is the first question to be settled. Is it one wild scene of confusion? Are we in the hands merely of impersonal forces? Is there anybody who knows that I exist, who takes note of what I think, of what I do, who cares anything about it, who has any interest in either the steps I take or the ends I reach? If there is a purpose in the universe, then, whether we can comprehend it or not, we may find it a rational thing for us to conclude that there may also be a purpose, and a definite, especial purpose, in our little personal lives.

Now, friends, I do not care to trouble you any with arguments concerning the old questions of design and plan, after the style of Paley and the writers on "evidence" of a hundred or two hundred years ago; but, as I survey this scene of things, as I fix my eyes so far as is possible on the far-away beginnings, as I trace the steps by which things have come to be where they are, and as I run my eye along these lines, and as I forecast, as I must, the probable, or at least the possible, outcome, I cannot avoid the rational conviction that there is purpose, that there is plan, in this "mighty maze" of things.

As a hint of what I mean, we know that this solar system of ours has grown from star-dust to a system with the sun at the centre, surrounded by its planets, and they by their satellites, moon or moons. We know that this has grown by orderly process, by logical steps, following an intelligible line of progress observable by us. Are we not, then, authorized to think that, from the standpoint of that Power which is controlling and shaping things, this intelligible line of progress is intelligent purpose and plan? How comes it to be intellectually intelligible to us, if there be no intelligent purpose working through it all? And precisely this same order that we observe in the growth of our own solar system we know is in progress in all parts of space. So far as our instruments of investigation are able to reach, we see everywhere this same method of creation being followed. And we see it now not only, but ever following the same intelligible lines. And, when our special solar system has been evolved, then what? Is there no intelligible order, no sign of purpose or plan, running through it since that day? It took ages for this earth to become capable of being inhabited by forms of life such as we are familiar with; but, the moment the first tiny form appeared, there appeared also this same orderly movement and lift, following lines of intelligent order and growth from the beginning, climbing up through various structures of the lower orders until man was

reached. Then the same order again, lifting and pushing and leading, until from the first physical development there came the mental, then the moral, then the spiritual,—a wavelike advance, the topmost crest of which is made up of the mighty souls of the world; and the force that has led, that has lifted, is undiminished still, leading on with promise of grander things to be.

And, then, if we choose to subdivide this human life of ours, if we trace the growth of the individual or of the family or of society or the industrial organization of the world or the ethical or the religious, it makes no matter which way we turn our eyes, in all these different departments of life we see parallel lines of orderly advance; and I for one, as a rational being, looking over this scene which is rationally comprehensible, cannot escape the conviction that reason, plan, purpose, order, are through it all.

If so, what? If there are purpose and plan and order in the whole, then that purpose includes and must include the minutest part that is essential to the completeness of that whole.

Take as an illustration the work of an architect. When he has laid out his plans for a magnificent building, that plan includes the proper laying of every brick, the proper application of every trowelful of mortar. It includes perfection in the minutest parts, and they are all essential to the completeness of the total result. Or, when a general lays out the plan of a vast campaign, that plan includes not only the intelligence and faithfulness of his generals, but it includes the intelligence and the faithfulness of the officers all the way down, and not only of the officers, but the intelligence and faithfulness of the poorest private and of the most insignificant, least important fragment of the whole army. All these are essential to the carrying out of his great plan.

But you say — and you will say it justly, for no finite illustration can adequately set forth an infinite truth — that these

illustrations do not teach quite enough for comfort. The architect does not think of every individual brick, of every individual trowelful of mortar. He does not think of the laying of each stone plumb and true and square. He cannot follow out all these details, keep an eye on it all, be personally interested in it all; and so, as far as he is concerned, you may think of him as indifferent to all these minute particulars. And in the case of the general: no general is able to be personally acquainted with, to come into personal contact with, more than a few of his lieutenants and subordinates. He cannot know every private soldier in the ranks. He cannot know their joys and sorrows, hopes and fears. The question as to whether any one private is properly clothed and fed, as to whether he is overworked on the march, or whether he receives the proper amount of rest, does not come to him. So these illustrations do not go far enough. What you and I want, if we may have it, is to believe that there is a grand plan governing the universe, and that he who is at the head of it is acquainted with his lieutenants and subordinates, and that they are acquainted with him, and so all the way down, rank by rank, to the smallest private. We want to feel, if we may, no less than this. It is the heart hunger that he who is supreme has a thought of us, tells us to do our duty, to occupy this position or that. We want to feel that there is this personal relationship between the individual soul, however small or poor or insignificant, and the one Infinite Soul which is the life of all.

Have we any right to believe in so stupendous, so overwhelming a truth — if it be a truth — as this? I believe that the illustrations which I used, though good for their purpose as far as they go, fall infinitely short of what we may trust is the grand reality of our individual lives. An infinite wisdom includes directly and without effort not only the wide scheme, but the very minutest particle of it; and when I see under the microscope a little dust particle float-

ing, or when I see some particle of matter so minute that I cannot discern it by the naked eye or one that I can see merely by the use of a scientific imagination, or when I think of the ultimate particles that make up a gas as in eternal motion sweeping round their tiny orbits,— as I think of these things, I am compelled to postulate the immediate presence, the immediate activity of God, to account for them, as much as I am to make me feel that Sirius is sweeping safely through his magnificent orbit, as much as I am to think that it is the divine power that sweeps to-day somewhere through space the comet that flashed across our horizon one hundred, two hundred, five hundred years ago, that I know is not lost, but is following the divine path, and is again to delight the eyes of those who prophesied that path and the moment of its return. When we are dealing with an infinite intelligence, we are compelled to believe that that intelligence includes the minutest as well as the most magnificent,—includes it all from lieutenants down to privates. And why should we not believe it? The only obstacle with which I am acquainted is merely the fact that it so overwhelms our imagination that we cannot think it. But there is no great cosmic truth with which I am familiar that we can think, that we can grasp; and we must remember that the measure of our capacity to grasp and comprehend a thing is not at all the measure of its truth or reality. We may demonstrate that a certain thing is true beyond all question, and yet utterly fail to comprehend it.

I believe, then, that your life and mine is a definite part of God's definite plan, and that he looks to you and to me to be faithful and true in the accomplishment of that part of the task which is assigned to us, and that it is important to the outcome as related to the whole. I had occasion, a few days ago, to purchase a piece of goods; and, after I had decided on the pattern and the quality that suited me, I found that there was a defect in it, which ruined it for my purpose. Only one thread was wrong, but that spoiled the

whole piece. And so even God cannot make things just right,— free from all defect,— except as we who are his co-workers see to it that the minutest part of the plan which has been confided to us is faithfully wrought out.

Now just what does this imply? It means, I believe, a purpose, a plan, and in your being and in my being just where we are to-day. If we have done wrong, if we are in a false position out of which we ought to take ourselves immediately, even that does not touch the general truth; for it means and includes this fact, that we should at once put ourselves right. There is a purpose and a plan, I believe, in our being just where we are this moment, facing just the task, the duty, that lies next our hand immediately before us.

Does this plan include the idea that we are, as the Prayer Book has it, to be "content in that station in life in which Providence has placed us"? Not at all, or not necessarily. I believe, rather, that there should be in the souls of all of us a divine discontent, a desire to be more, to possess more, to accomplish more than we have yet been able to reach. But there are several limitations to this. We are not at liberty to gain something we desire, to change our position for a more favorable one, to become wiser, stronger, richer, to attain a more exalted station, at a cost either of utter faithfulness to ourselves or at the cost of that which is essential to the life, the well-being, the happiness, of any other soul on earth. We are to stay where we are; we are to fill the position in which we find ourselves, fill it truly, fill it completely, fill it with uttermost faithfulness; and we are at the same time to be ready to know more, to do more, to become more, to occupy a better, finer, higher, more desirable position, just as soon as we can do it without being false to ourselves or false to our fellow-men. But I believe it is God's plan — it is our highest, grandest duty — to stand just where we are, and fill the place where we find ourselves, until there is a path open,— a path along which, with just

and loving feet, we may tread, that shall lead us into a more desirable way.

I know that this is a hard doctrine; and it is not less hard for me than for any of you. Never think when I am preaching to you some difficult thing, something hard of accomplishment, that I do it because I have found it easy. I am in the midst of the same struggle, subject to the same temptations, ready to stumble over the same obstacles, to soil my robes in the same dust; and yet, seeing that which I believe to be the highest and best for myself, I see also that which is highest and best for you.

Let us look at one or two concrete examples. Take the case of the young man who feels himself getting on only indifferently well in business,— not meeting with the kind or degree of success that he hoped for in his earlier days. And here is one on his right hand and one on his left, by ways which he is not quite ready to stoop to, stepping up and onward into higher mercantile position, places of larger pay and more responsibility. Shall I say to him, Stay where you are until, with uttermost honor, with clear-eyed truth, you can go into a higher place? A thousand times yes. For you cannot afford to sacrifice yourself, to be less of a man, to injure and degrade the life of one of your fellow-men, for the sake of apparent haste towards business success. That man makes poor speed who outruns and leaves behind his own soul.

Or take the case of the woman whose life is narrow, poor, hindered, hampered at every turn. I know thousands of such, capable of thought, capable of study, capable of social enjoyments, capable of all sorts of high and fine things which are yet forbidden. Why? They are tied to the present duty, no matter what it be. I need not go into details; but, in order to be utterly true to the place in which they find themselves, they must forego this inviting pathway and that, and feel sometimes, perhaps, that their own lives are shrinking, dwarfed, poorer than they might have

been, for lack of dew and sunshine and air. They have failed to unfold the finer, higher faculties of their souls. What shall we tell them? Until the time comes when, without injury to any other soul, without unfaithfulness to that duty which seems to be placed by a higher power directly before them, they must stand, being true, at any rate, to the present duty, and trusting for what is to come.

Do you not see, can you not gain a glimpse of, the great truth that, by being thus faithful to their own finer, higher selves, they are culturing and developing that which is most God-like in them, no matter at what loss? I know such people, in whose presence I feel not only like taking off my hat with reverence, but I feel sometimes like bending my knee, knowing that by being at their feet I am on holy ground.

No matter what the obstacle may be, we cannot gain anything by being false to the task that to-day is ours; and, if we ever wish to reach any finer, higher position, is there any other way except that of culturing the finest, highest, truest, sweetest things in us, so that, when the path does open, we may step up into this higher place that we have mastered, with all that is best in us, with power with which to deal with the new circumstances, to accomplish the higher and finer results for which we have prepared ourselves?

What is the finest thing in a man or woman? Is it not what *they are?* Is it not the soul, the spirit of love, of helpfulness? and is it not true that all we can acquire of position, of surroundings, will at last be adjudged of importance only as we have been able to make them minister to the cultivation of what we are and become? Overwhelm the architect with materials, bury him under them, and he proves his ability as an architect only by his power to use them in the construction of some fine structure that is worthy of his genius. And so all our money, all our place, all our power of every kind, is only so much material intrusted to us; and we succeed only as we convert these into soul-culture.

And, then, the finest thing we can do, after we have *become*,

is to help somebody else to the attainment of the same grand end; and the meaning of our lives is to be found just here, and that meaning can be attained only by utter faithfulness in the place where we are and to the next duty that lies at our hand.

I do not mean that we should not reach out our hands, as we are engaged in this great struggle for soul attainment, to take what comfort, what cheer, what fellowship, what inspiration, what love we can attain, if so be that these things really help lift and do not hurt and degrade the soul. This is to be the criterion by which we are to measure the matter of indulgence. In this struggle I sometimes do not know which most to pity, the over-rich or the over-poor. There are peculiar temptations and almost equal dangers, perhaps, surrounding them both. The rich is so apt to feel the sense of responsibility loosening, to feel that he has attained, to say, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and to forget that possibly, in this higher sense of which I have spoken, he is all the while "poor and miserable and blind and naked."

And the poor? He is so apt to suffer from the opposite temptation, feeling that it is not worth while to try, so little can be accomplished. So little! Friends, there is no comparison of little or great here; for what is it you are engaged in? You are engaged in the building of a soul; and there are no little souls or great souls, so far as this work or this possibility is concerned. And they who are faithful in obscurity, faithful when no one is overlooking, may find that they are working into the quality of their lives a finer grain than otherwise would be possible. The overseer of a great factory finds it easy to be faithful. He knows that promotion depends on that, that the stockholders and managers have their eye on him day by day, measuring him, and that according to that measure he will succeed. But how is it with the man at the bench, who is engaged on some mere fragment of the work, and who does not expect any promotion, but who is only trying to go from one weary day to an-

other? It is a great deal harder for a man like that to be faithful. But, if a man remembers that, no matter what his outward and ostensible occupation may be, what he is really doing is working on the soul, then there is no question of position, of high or low, but only a question as to whether you shall help discover the meaning of your own life and attain it. And, if we do not clearly see the way, still we need not doubt that there is a way.

I wish to close this morning by calling your attention to an illustration with which, perhaps, you are familiar, but so beautiful, so fitting, that I know of no better way with which to round out my theme.

It is said that the tapestry-weavers abroad work always upon what is called the wrong side of their task, looking at the pattern that is above them, but not seeing just what it is, or just how much they are accomplishing, working on thus blindly day by day, being merely faithful to the next tiny stitch to be taken in their work, having confidence in their overseer, and knowing that a failure in the least shall appear as a defect in the completed result. I believe that, in this matter of working out our own life's meaning, whatever the pattern may be, there is nothing finer or better that any soul can do than merely to take the next stitch as accurately as may be in the light of what we believe to be the grand design.

"Let us take to our hearts a lesson — no lesson can braver be —
From the ways of the tapestry-weavers on the other side of the sea.
Above their heads the pattern hangs; they study it with care;
The while their fingers deftly weave, their eyes are fastened there.
They tell this curious thing, besides, of the patient, plodding weaver,—
He works on the wrong side evermore, but works for the right side ever.
It is only when the weaver stops, and the web is loosed and turned,
That he sees his real handiwork,— that his marvellous skill is learned.
Ah! the sight of its delicate beauty! how it pays him for all it cost!
No rarer, daintier work than his was ever done by the frost.
The years of man are Nature's looms, let down from the place of the sun,
Wherein we are weaving alway, till the mystic web is done.
Sometimes blindly; but weaving surely, each for himself his fate;
We may not see how the right side looks: we must often weave and wait."

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MESSIAH PULPIT

NEW YORK

(Being a continuation of *Unity Pulpit*, Boston)

SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

VOL. III. DECEMBER 16, 1898. NO. 11.

Green Pastures and Still Waters

GEO. H. ELLIS
141 FRANKLIN STREET, BOSTON
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1898

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NOTE.

Dr. Savage was suddenly taken ill Sunday morning, and was unable to preach. He is already better, and will begin his series on "Immortality" next Sunday. He greatly regrets the necessity for the republication of another old sermon, and begs the indulgence of his readers.

GREEN PASTURES AND STILL WATERS.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters."

Ps. xxiii. 2.

"FAMILIARITY breeds contempt," it is said. It is apt, at any rate, to breed indifference. An exquisite bit of literature that was used as a task — perhaps as a parsing lesson — at school is almost sure to become spoiled for us as literature. At least, it takes time for us to get rid of the drudgery associations, and learn to look upon it as "a thing of beauty," which is "a joy forever." The farmers that were born under the shadow of Mt. Washington, who have seen it welcome with a flush of joy the first rays of the rising sun, and glow with its last good-night kiss ever since they were children, are not the ones who most appreciate its wonder and glory. Thousands of persons in our Protestant Christendom — I presume the larger part of us — have had to commit the twenty-third Psalm to memory as part of some Sunday-school lesson. We stumbled over it without any distinct sense of its beauty. And, since that day, it is probable that the words have sounded trite to us: they have borne the finger-marks of our task-work, and we have had little appreciation of their exquisite poetry. I wonder how many persons have ever waked up to the fact of the position and rank that this anonymous little lyric may rightly claim merely as poetry? Do you know that there are not half a dozen others in all the literatures of the world that are entitled to stand beside it?

What a beautiful picture it draws! Its author felt that he, at least, had found, in all the confusion of the world, some

one to guard and guide him. Henceforth there are to be for him no haunting, unsatisfied longings: "I shall not want." "For his name's sake,"— because of what he is in himself, his own goodness,— he guides me ever in right paths. Though my way be through the darkest shadows, I will have no fear: he knows, leads, and comforts me. However numerous my enemies, however helpless I seem in their presence, whatever adverse circumstances close me round, he spreads my table of supply even in their very presence. My head is anointed as one prepared for a festival. My cup of rejoicing is so full that it runneth over. The future has no fears for me; for only goodness and mercy will follow me — attendants about my pathway — all the days of my life. And, as a guest, I will dwell in the house of this mighty helper and friend forever.

And all the way through, a lingering, haunting suggestion of plenty and peace and perfect rest, we see the background of "green pastures"; while the floating cloud of the calm sky by day and the quiet stars by night are reflected in the "still waters"; or, as the margin has it, the "waters of rest."

In those old days then, before even the dawn of what we call civilization, the author of this Psalm had found — had he not? — the secret of the ideal life. Is not satisfaction, content, the thing we all are after? And of what use to us is all our boasted control over the forces of nature, the extraordinary development of our external life; of what avail our epics, our dramas, our music; where is the good of our scientific achievements; what for is all our wealth and culture, if, in the midst of all, we are dissatisfied and restless as before?

In Byron's powerful drama of "Cain," his hero meets and converses with Satan, and the following brief and suggestive dialogue takes place: —

"*Cain:* Art thou happy?
Satan: I am mighty!
Cain: Art thou happy?
Satan: No: art thou?"

Milton indeed makes Satan declare his creed in the words,—

"Better to rule in hell than serve in heaven!"

But Jesus — a better authority, I think, in a matter of this kind — says that the fundamental law of the divine kingdom is that he who faithfully serves the welfare of others is the highest of all.

The modern world, like Byron's Satan, is proud of being mighty, even at the cost of a great unrest at the heart. But let us consider a minute. What, after all, is the use of my flying at the rate of fifty miles an hour from city to city, if, when I get back again, I am as restless and careworn as when I started? Why should I be so anxious to get a message to Chicago inside of thirty minutes, if it only makes life more busy and burdensome, making no happier either the sender or the receiver? To what end shall the astronomer take me on a swift journey of millions of miles among the stars, if this poor old earth, when I get back, is just as unsatisfactory an abode as it was before? Who is the better or happier because he can whisper his commonplace or unkind or plotting conversation through a telephone instead of being obliged to use a slower process of saying what would make the world no poorer, if it were not said at all? What is the use of soft carpets for restless feet, of decorated walls for eyes that no seeing satisfies, of luxurious homes for aching hearts? Would it not be well for us now and then to listen to the home-thrust question of Isaiah,— "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not?" We are all of us after satisfaction; and yet the most of us spend our lives in a restless search for the means that we think will lead to it, or in envying others that we think possess it; and, all the while, it is a bird waiting outside on our window-seat, ready at our beckoning to come in and sit on our hand, and sing to us its sweet, contented song.

How many sane people really think that Mr. Vanderbilt is as many times happier than other people as he is millions richer than they? And yet thousands of persons would sell their souls — such souls as they have — for half his wealth. I once heard a fairly well-to-do merchant say that he would be willing to spend his life, till he was sixty years old, in a little counting-room, six feet by eight, for $30,000. He would sell his life's manhood — the ocean, the mountains, the wide fields, the woods, the birds, poetry, history, religion, friends — for a mean, narrow old age, and a monument over the grave of the contemptible remains of a useless life. Well, I wouldn't! How many sane people really believe that the best things of life depend on the street they live in? And yet thousands would barter honesty for the sake of a street. Other thousands will make their present homes unhappy, will be bitterly envious towards somebody whose house is more costly than theirs, will vent this envy on the husband or wife they have sworn to cherish, instead of finding happiness in what they have. How many sane women really think that other women, who write books, make themselves a career, become famous, are happy just because of these things? And yet many, who have *only* loving husbands, healthy children, *only* the beauty and glory of the world, *only* God and immortal hopes, will distil the bitterness of discontent out of all these flowers in life's garden, instead of rejoicing in their color and fragrance; and all because they are not something other than what they are. Many and many of these famous women would gladly barter all their fame for a strong man's love and a babe nestling in their bosoms. How many sane people really believe that a man is happy, just because he has made a great scientific discovery or some new industrial invention? And yet how few utilize what is already discovered or turn to account the inventions already made, so as to find what the envied authors of them probably missed,— the green pastures and the still waters of life!

It is perhaps true that all people start out in life by hungrily seeking the impossible. The child, in its nurse's arms, cries for the moon. That is fairly typical of humanity. We are all bundles of appetites. Physically, we are like a callow birdling in its nest,— a wide-open mouth. We hunger for food. The eye, the ear, every sense, every nerve, hungers for sensuous gratification. Hear a boy ask questions, and note the beginning of that restless and insatiable curiosity that leads on the mind to the discovery of all truth. See this same child rush to father or mother, climbing in their arms, flushing with pleasure at some demonstration of love. Note here the earliest unfolding of that heart-hunger that we call love, that is, perhaps, the mightiest power in all the world; that builds up kingdoms and overthrows them; that makes and ruins homes; that thrusts down to hell and lifts up to heaven; that writes novels, sings poetry, inspires the dramas of the world; that is the mightiest power in religion; that creates heaven, and fixes God on his throne. Then there is that spiritual hunger that aspires after the infinite, wanders through eternity, and makes its home in the unseen. Man is thus ever restless, because he does not attain the impossible. No mountain summit satisfies him, because there is a higher summit beyond.

What is the practical outcome of all this restless striving? Many never learn its real lesson, but keep on restless and dissatisfied to the last. They never find peace; but hurry and hurry, until their feet stumble over the edge of the grave, and there comes to us who are left a sense of relief that a part of them at least is now still.

Others learn from it what seems to me a lamentably false lesson. They find no rest; and so they conclude that life is only an illusion, a will-o'-the-wisp that leads nowhere. So they give up aspiring, and sink into contentment with low and unworthy things. These are the authors of such sage maxims as that he who desires nothing is in no danger of

disappointment. The central thought of one of the world's great religions — that of Buddha — is here. "Quench all desire, and ye will attain to peace." Of course you will; but, then, what is the use of life at all? This is the creed of disappointment and despair. It may lead a person to self-denial and practical death; or it may lead one to say: "What is the use? Let us eat and drink and indulge in the sensual pleasures that are nearest at hand, for to-morrow we die."

Or, again, this same conviction that such a thing as a satisfied life is impossible may lead one, under the spur of an inherited strong sense of duty, bravely to bear the load an inscrutable fate has laid on his shoulders; while at the same time he is never reconciled to life, and gets no restful satisfaction out of it. Such wonder what it is all for, and never attain any peaceful trust. They know of no one who leads to green pastures or beside still waters. Green pastures and still waters, though others talk of them, they think are only mirages in a desert: the sand of the glaring, weary waste is the only real thing to them.

It is this restless dissatisfaction, and this locating of the green pastures and still waters of satisfaction in wrong places, that is the root of much of the socialist and communistic unrest of the modern world. Do not misunderstand me. I would not lay the blame on the poor who wish to better their social conditions. So long as their social superiors appear to believe, hold, teach, and practise the belief that the chief good of life is to be found in houses and land and clothes and money and amusements, why should not the poor accept the creed, and try to attain these things? If the world's possessors only lived for higher ends, if they proved that they regarded these things only as means towards these higher ends, if they were willing to work to help the poor to gain those ends that are better than money, then the poor might believe it, and the world would rise together. Until the rich do this, they may look for earthquakes and upheavals.

A few in every age, as the result of their seeking for the impossible, do learn the true lesson of life. After trying all the "broken cisterns that can hold no water," they seek the living springs. They suffer themselves to be led into green pastures and beside the still waters. They find rest unto their souls.

But, you say, is it not true that our "glorious civilization" is the result of just this restless, competitive striving? Would you have the world settle down into calm content and seek no more? Let us look just a moment at this matter of content and striving, and see if we can find a way in the confusion. Paul says, on a certain occasion, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." And yet Paul's was one of the most restless, striving, aspiring natures that ever lived. It was he who said also, "I count not myself to have apprehended; but, forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those that are before, I press toward the goal,"— the goal of a perfection that ever eludes attainment. What then? Paul says, "I have *learned* to be content." It is a lesson, then, that the wise man learns in the midst of a constantly progressive life. And this lesson consists of two or three points that are worth noting separately in our thought.

First, it is right to strive for personal satisfaction, if we do not do it at the expense of the welfare of others. Not only right, we ought to seek to know and be and do the most, the noblest possible. We cannot teach others, except as we know. We cannot give to others, except as we have. We cannot lift up others, except as we are strong. We cannot lead others, except as we can see the way. We cannot do for others, except as we develop capacity in ourselves.

Secondly, we ought not to be content with our present capacity for being or doing, so long as it is possible for us to reach further attainment. The way is long: we have no business to sleep in contented laziness under the wayside

hedges, while so much of the pathway remains untrod. It was not this kind of content that Paul had learned. He never felt that he was through or that his work was done. Always did he count himself an unprofitable servant. Always did he see new fields waiting for his reaping hand. And yet, all the while, peace was singing in his heart her low, sweet song of content. In weary journeys, in shipwreck among barbarians, beset by false friends, pursued by calumny, bearing on his heart always the cares of the great work in which he was engaged,— somehow, in the midst of all, we see the real Paul, his soul, lying in the green pastures and beside the waters of rest. He had evidently learned some secret. Like Jesus, he had meat to eat that we know not of, and for lack of which we go hungry.

Perhaps, thirdly, he had learned this: that a man on a journey, though he does not expect to reach the end for a month or a year, may yet be content with each day as it passes, and as a stage towards the next. Suppose it takes an oak a hundred years to get its full and perfect growth: still, were the oak conscious of itself and its destiny, would it not be possible for it to be content with each day's growth, to rejoice with the singing birds, laugh in the sunshine, and play with the winds of each day? Would it not be more reasonable than to use up its strength in such restless anxiety as would hinder the growth itself?

We all desire, then, personal satisfaction; and I believe it is right and best that we should seek it. But I also think we make lamentable mistakes in our search for it. I need offer no proof of this beyond the acknowledged fact that so few people find it. Green pastures and still waters,— what a sound of alluring invitation there is in those words for our weary lives! Just now, in the opening summer, they have for us special suggestions of rest. How they call up to us our childhood, before we had learned what it means to be world-weary! What summer days do I see, and what long, delicious twilights in the country!

I am lying on my back upon a grassy slope, under a clump of trees. The leaves over my head rustle as if they would sing me a lullaby. I watch a white cloud go sailing across the upper sea; while my fancy freights it as it will, and muses of its far-off harbor, in some blessed island towards the sunset. I have but to turn my head, and I see my childhood's river gliding by so noiselessly that it seems perfectly still, and looks like a sheet of glass. The shadow of my cloud is in its depths; and the trees on its banks lean over to look at the reflection of their glossy leaves. As the picture rises before me, I catch the echo of voices I shall hear no more. The old days are back again. Life's burdens and cares fall off; and I am once more the boy who lived a careless eternity in one summer afternoon.

Have we not all these memories of green pastures and still waters? It may be a mountain lake on whose margin we once lay down to rest. It may be a grassy, tree-sheltered seat, overlooking Como, with the white-topped Alps in the distance; or "clear, placid Leman," with its castle of Chillon seen as deep in its luminous depths as its towers rise high in air; or it is Wordsworth's haunted Grasmere, as still and deep as the poet's own soul.

How these memories haunt us! How we long for them, when weary of the treadmill round of walking, thinking, drudging, planning, struggling with the theoretical and practical problems of life! The man is tired of his store or his office. The mother is tired of her household cares, — of thinking what shall be eaten and what shall be worn. The children are tired of their schools. The minister is tired of his sermon.

Now — and this is the great question — is it possible for us to get these green pastures and still waters into our souls? Can we have them as permanent possessions, always with us? Can we, in the midst of our daily occupations, have satisfaction and peace?

I make no claims of personal attainment, friends; but,

standing with you, in the midst of life's cares, at times as much troubled as any of you all, I see the green pastures and the still waters, and long to have them for my own. Sometimes they are mine for a little time. I verily believe their possession is an open secret, accessible to us all. I think I know the way, if I have not always walked in it. Will you let me point it out to you?

It is close at hand. All wonderful things always are. It only needs eyes to see and ears to hear. In the mystery that is all about us, that we, being commonplace, call commonplace, the poet sees his poem,— beauty and wonder that we never dreamed of. We search for God; and he is in the grass-blade we trample on. So the best satisfactions of life are near and accessible to us all, else were the universe misgoverned indeed. Which way, then, lie the green pastures and the still waters of life? I know they exist, and that circumstances cannot keep us altogether from finding them. Dante found them in exile. They have cooled the flames for a thousand martyrs. Bunyan discovered them in prison. Which way, then, do they lie?

The first step is this,— to find the good of each day as it passes, to live in it and rejoice in it, not throwing it away because it is not something else. What are the indispensable things of a blessed life? A fair degree of health, food, fresh air, water, the blue sky, the green earth, flowers, birds, a book, and a friend. No monopolist can monopolize these. We may all have them, if we deserve them and will,— all except the health; and, generally, our lack of this is chiefly our own fault. When we are miserable, it is almost always because, like a spoiled child, we sit in the midst of plenty, and cry for something just then beyond our reach. We accuse the justice and bounty of God, while our arms are full of the really best things there are. The first step, then, toward the green pastures and still waters of peace and satisfaction is to learn that the sources of satisfaction — or the opposite — are in ourselves. We make

our own worlds. If there is no beauty or good in them, it is because we cannot see or feel or smell or taste. We stand in our own garden, with our back turned to all its beauty; and, leaning over the fence of our neighbor, we fancy everything there so much better than our own.

The next step is this,— to find or make a purpose in life that shall redeem it from its petty selfishness and purely personal aims. Well may the world seem poor to one, and hardly worth while, who sees in it nothing more than a place where he is to get something to eat, something to wear, a place to sleep, and a grave to lie in when he gets through eating, dressing, and sleeping. Robert Browning somewhere speaks of the "development of a soul," and says that "little else is worth study." Suppose you think over that awhile. Remember your own higher life, and also that this world may well be thought of as a developing school for all souls. Remember, also, that you play the dual part of scholar and teacher both. Let your soul be kindled by the thought of your having a share in the work for which alone the existence of the planet is worth while. Link yourself with a cause, and share its dignity. Then, as you remember that this, the great end of life, must succeed, because it is the outblossoming of the very heart of God, you will learn to take the little failures and disappointments of life as incidents not worth being very unhappy over. You will not mourn over every leaf that falls from life's tree, so long as you know the fruit is ripening in the sun. Perhaps you will even learn that the falling leaves only let in the sunshine all the more, and where it is most needed.

And the last step is this,— the attainment of such a trust in the outcome of life as shall make you look upon death, not as the catastrophe that closes the drama of life, but only as the temporary fall of a curtain in preparation for a grander scene to follow.

Suppose we all took these three steps,— finding out the good that is really in each passing day, and learning to

rejoice in it; linking our lives with great and noble causes, more important than our petty plans, and that must succeed, so assuring our highest success; and then so living in the eternal and permanent things of love and truth and good as to bring us the assurance that because they live we shall live also,— do you not see that they would lead us into green pastures and beside the waters of rest?

And is there not in every day —
  Earth's beauty and sweet love's caress,
In health, in books, in childhood's play —
  More than enough for happiness?

And though our petty plans fall through,
  All noble deeds that have been done,
All noble deeds that we may do,
  Shall help the triumph to be won.

And, if in nobleness of heart
  We trust and labor in earth's strife,
That grand life, of which we are part,
  Shall keep us to eternal life.

Here, then, whate'er is gained or lost,
  Is strong assurance of the best:
For all who struggle, tempest-tost,
  E'en in the tempest there is rest.

Our Shepherd watches where we lie;
  He guards us if we wake or sleep;
Green pastures spread before the eye;
  Still waters in the sunshine sleep.

UNITARIAN CATECHISM

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

Price, Paper, per	Copy	20 cents
" " "	Doz.	$1.50
" Cloth, "	Copy	30 cents
" " "	Doz.	$2.50

INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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VOL. III. DECEMBER 23, 1898. NO. 12.

SERIES ON

BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

I. Primitive Ideas of Death and After

GEO. H. ELLIS
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PRIMITIVE IDEAS OF DEATH AND AFTER.

As a text, I take the words to be found in the fourteenth chapter of Job and the fourteenth verse,— the question asked so many times and as yet, to the satisfaction of the world, not completely answered: "If a man dies, shall he live again?"

It is said that, when Henry D. Thoreau lay dying in Concord, his friend Parker Pillsbury sat by his bedside; and he leaned over, and took him by the hand, and said, "Henry, you are so near to the border now, can you see anything on the other side?" And Thoreau answered, "One world at a time, Parker."

It has seemed to a great many that this answer is wisdom. I cannot so take it. The human race never will surrender this quest until, one way or the other, it is settled. We cannot take one world at a time. Why? There are two or three answers which I wish to suggest.

In the first place, on the reply to this query, "If a man die, shall he live again?" depends our answer to the question: What kind of a being is man? What am I? The Greek wise man said that the most important item of all knowledge was to know one's self. We cannot know ourselves until we know whether the grave is the end of us or not. Is there something in us that overleaps the gulf we call death, that continues through the dissolution of the body? Do we end when what we call life ends, or do we simply keep on? Is death the extinguisher of life, or is he the

great gate-opener, letting us out into larger fields, wider and grander opportunities? Until I know whether there is something in me that death cannot touch or destroy, I cannot know what sort of a person I am.

And, in the second place, until I can find out what sort of a person I am, how am I going to determine an answer to the question as to how I ought to live? The kind of life appropriate to a bird or to an animal of any sort depends entirely upon the nature, the faculties, the possibilities, of that bird or animal. What it can become or accomplish, it ought to become or accomplish, we say. Now what can man do? What can man become? What can he accomplish?

We cannot answer that question until we can find out approximately what sort of being man is. Shall I live simply as an animal? Not at my peril, if I am something else than an animal, something more than an animal. Is wealth or fame or pleasure the appropriate end and object of human life? That depends upon what a man is, what a man is capable of doing and being. So, for the sake of finding out what kind of life a man ought to lead, we need to know whether he is a soul or whether he is only a body.

The whole question of the emphasis of morals is to be determined right here. If I decide that, when I come to the grave, I am to lie down in an age-long sleep, why, of course, that does not make right wrong, or wrong right: it does not therefore become proper for me to steal or to cheat or to lie, to take advantage of my neighbor. But where I shall place the emphasis of my moral life, and how much I shall think it worth my while to try to accomplish or to become,— the answer to these questions depends vitally upon my opinion as to whether my life leads out into something beyond the grave or not.

To illustrate: If I know that, after I have lived ten years here, that is the end of me, why, one kind of life would be appropriate to me. If I know that at the end of ten or

twenty years I am going suddenly to be transferred to some other country, to some other kind of life, in the midst of other kinds of people, have other ambitions and cares, and that the life I am leading here is of no particular account except as a preparation for that, and that that is to continue indefinitely, do you not see that it changes the whole problem as to where I am to place the emphasis of my life?

One other point I wish to suggest: I cannot go into these matters in any detail. I believe that the solution of our industrial and social problems depends more than almost anything else upon our answer to this question as to what is the nature of man, and what is his destiny. Those who have made a careful study of these questions, already warn us that the Socialists are saying, "It used to be the Church and the nobility, now it is the Church and the *bourgeois;* and in either case they are telling us to be contented with the lot in which Providence has chosen to place us, and to look for our consolation in some other life. That is what they have always been telling us. Now we do not believe in any other life, and we propose to have our share of the good things of the world as they go."

That is only Paul's logic. "If the dead rise not," Paul says, "let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die." That is what the Socialists are saying. If there is no future life, we are going in for our share of the good things here. And if this life is only a larger dog-kennel, if we are shut in under "this inverted bowl men call the sky," and, when we get through here, that is the end of it,—if that is true, tell me why some fortunate member of the canine race should sit and guard a pile of bones a thousand times larger than he can eat, while I simply whine and starve?

If there is another life, if this is only preparation; if we are not bodies, but souls, and we are cultivating our souls through the discipline of life's experiences here for that infinite career which opens through the gateway of death,—

then that is one thing. It may be worth while, then, to be poor; it may be worth while to want, to suffer, to go through any experience, so I be true to myself. But, if the time ever comes when the great masses of the world have made up their minds that all there is to human life is right here, then look to your social order; and, with Paul's word as authority, they can demand their little share of something to eat and drink before the to-morrow comes when they are to die.

These are some hints as to the reasons why, in my opinion, we cannot take one world at a time. The question as to whether there is another world makes all imaginable difference as to what we shall think about and how we shall use this one.

One or two other preliminary thoughts need to be touched on briefly. There are large numbers of people who tell us that this is a problem impossible of solution; that we can hope and dream as much as we please, but we shall never be able to know. I have had this told me, I suppose, a thousand times when I have been discussing the matter. But the world has done so many "impossible" things that I do not despair even of this. We are not in the temper now to have wise people draw lines beyond which they say we cannot go. Comte tried it, the great French philosopher. He said it was no use trying to study the nature of the fixed stars; that was something forever beyond the reach of the human intellect. But he had hardly been buried before the spectroscope was discovered; and we know all about it now. A man in England said a steamship could not cross the Atlantic Ocean; and his demonstration was hardly completed when a ship did come over, and brought the proof that it could not possibly do it.

So we are not in a temper to be very patient with the people who tell us it is impossible to do this or that or the other. We will decide that it is impossible when there is no avenue of investigation or study that is left to us.

There are others who tell us that it is better that we should not know. I wonder how they found it out? They say that moral action must have in it an element of faith, of uncertainty. If you are sure of the result of what you do, the moral quality is taken out of it. I could never quite see why. A thing is good, even if I know that it is good. It is not necessary that I should have a doubt about it, in order to create a moral quality.

Then there are those who tell us that there would be a rapid increase of suicides if we were perfectly certain about the other life,— that men would not bear the burdens that crush them down if they knew that death was not the end. Rather do I think that the number of suicides would decrease if we knew, first, that life keeps on; and, if we knew, secondly, that under the universal law of cause and effect we are creating the to-morrow of death by the way in which we live the to-day of life. Rather do I believe that men would learn patiently to bear almost anything if they knew that the outcome was to be something certain, and that it might possibly be high and fine if they chose to make it so.

So I believe that this hope that there is something better waiting us across the border, if it can be transformed from hope to an absolute certainty, would be a grand gain in the upward lift of the life of man.

There is one other thing that people are saying to us constantly,— I have had it said to me no end of times,— If God had intended that we should know, he would have made it perfectly plain to us. Why does not that principle apply to every other item of knowledge as well? If God had intended that Europe should know there was another continent over here to the west, he would have made it perfectly plain, and not left the world to wonder and speculate and venture for several thousand years before they found it out.

As a matter of fact, God has not directly told us anything. He has left us to study and investigate on our own account,

and to develop and cultivate our own intellectual and moral and spiritual natures in this process of study and investigation.

So much by way of preliminary. Let us turn now to consider briefly — for it will require no very profound investigation — the ideas of death and after which were held by primitive men.

You know the Catholic Church tells us that Catholic doctrine is held with absolute certainty because all men always and everywhere have believed it. In other words, that which has been always believed by all men everywhere is true. So it may be important for us, in view of this assertion, to find out what the ideas of primitive man were on so important a subject as this.

But can we get at primitive man? Those who know, or think they know, tell us that men have been on this planet for something like three or four hundred thousand years.

How then can we get at the thoughts of primitive men? We cannot, in one sense; and yet, so far as all practical necessity is concerned, we can. We need to remember that there are men to-day on the islands of the sea and in distant parts of the world who are living in a stage of culture that represented man's life two hundred thousand years ago. And we are to remember that these first men progressed very slowly. And we are to remember, further, that religion, as we are finding out by constant experience every day of our lives, is the last thing in the world that anybody is ever willing to change. Men hold it as so sacred that they hesitate to touch or change a religious belief or ritual or habit. So that for all practical purposes we can get at the primitive ideas of man concerning death and another life.

And right here let me say that it seems to me one of the strangest, one of the most startling things in the world, that men should have ever dreamed of another life at all. We stand beside a casket containing the body of a friend. That mysterious something that we call life is gone. That which

looked out on the eyes, that which shaped the viewless air into speech of the lips, that which was in the clasp of the hand, that which animated the feet on their errands of kindliness and mercy,— life,— is gone. And it certainly does seem as though this were the end. And so I say it seems to me one of the most startling, audacious imaginations that ever entered the mind of man. Whence did it come,— the dream that something lives after death? Some very remarkable thing must have happened along the lines of evolution between the highest animal and the lowest man. Animals think, dream, reason. Animals are conscious; but animals are not self-conscious. No dog ever says, I am a dog, and thinks out the difference between himself and other kinds of animals. If we should once see a Newfoundland dog bent in sorrow over the body of a comrade, weeping tears of heartbreak and saying to himself, "If a dog die, shall he live again?" we would think we were in the presence of some strange phenomenon, something more than we associate with animal life. And yet the lowest man that has ever been found on the face of the earth has not only asked this question, but has always answered it in the affirmative.

One of the most striking things is to note that primitive men never believe in natural death. When a man dies, they feel perfectly certain that somebody has killed him: it is an enemy. If not an enemy in the body, then a malignant spirit or one of the gods. This is the point I wish you to note: that primitive man does not believe in death. He believes that it is always caused by somebody; that it cannot be natural, a part of any order of things. Indeed he has no idea of any order of things.

Now it is very natural that a crude, ignorant being should give very unsatisfactory reasons for his belief. Primitive man, wherever he can be found, always believes in a spiritual and an ordinarily invisible existence; but the reasons that he would give you for holding that belief might

be very crude and ignorant. It is, on the face of it, very strange and startling that it should be believed at all.

The origin of the belief is still a matter of dispute among scholars. A certain class of thinkers associate it with shadows and dreams and swoons; and very likely they may be right. Primeval man has no idea of the laws of reflection of light; and he sees himself sometimes accompanied by a shadowy, secondary self that comes in a mysterious fashion and goes away, he does not know how. He bends over a pool or a running stream, and sees this shadowy, secondary self there again, the one he had seen in the sunlight. It comes and goes in a wonderful way, he knows not why. Then he lies down when he is tired, and goes to sleep; and he is off on a journey. He visits friends, he fights with his enemies, he is engaged in the delights and excitements of the chase. By and by he comes to himself, he wakes up; and why should not this dream experience seem to him as real as any other? But his comrades tell him that his body has been here all the time, has not moved. Then he straightway reasons, it is this spiritual, shadowy, secondary self that has been off on these excursions, engaged in these different occupations.

And then, in the case of swoons, perhaps an enemy strikes him with a club, and he loses consciousness. His friends would not be able to tell that from death except that in one case this secondary self returns, and in the other it does not. We have kept still, in our civilized and modern speech, the last pale remnant of that old idea. A friend faints; and, as she is recovering consciousness, we say, "She is coming to." She is coming back to the body that she had temporarily left. That is what the phrase means.

And who shall tell us whether these primitive men were right or wrong? No philosopher, no scientist on the face of the earth is as yet able to explain to us either sleep or dream. There are those who believe that in sleep the spirit does temporarily leave the body, as an engineer leaves his

engine for a little time, while he oils it and coals it and gets it ready to run its course again. There are men, I say, in the modern world, who believe this; and there is nobody wise enough to convince them that they are wrong. It is a matter concerning which we have no definite knowledge one way or the other.

But the point you need to note and bear in mind is that primitive man, by some process of reasoning, came to accept the belief that he did have a secondary self inside his body, which could exist apart from his body, and which could go and come as a man leaves his house and returns to it again, and which, when death came to the body, went to return no more; but did not cease to exist.

Now there are one or two points connecting this idea with modern religious beliefs and practices which I must notice briefly.

The first altar was undoubtedly a grave; for, believing that their dead friends continued to exist, they naturally reasoned that they continued to hunger and thirst just as they did here. So they brought and poured out on the grave drink for them, and laid upon it food, believing that then they ate the spiritual essence, knowing of course that the substance which they could see and handle was not thus consumed. A precisely similar idea, however, to this, enters into the philosophy of the eucharist as it is held in the Catholic Church to-day.

The chants that were gone through with in celebration of the virtues and heroic qualities of the dead have their modern representative undoubtedly in our hymns of praise. They prayed to the dead, because they believed that these invisible friends or enemies were all about them in the air, and could help them or hurt them at will. They lighted fires on graves to show the soul the pathway through the dark in its journey to its other home; and in certain churches of the modern world candles are lighted and placed at the head of the casket; and the one is vitally, in-

timately connected with the other. The candle is only the civilized and modern representative of the primitive man's fire, which was to light the way of the soul on its dark journey.

That which at first was only food and drink for the dead developed later into sacrifice; and this sacrifice at first was a communion meal, of which the god partook along with his worshippers. Then, later still, it became an offering of thanks or of propitiation. The Eucharist, which did not originate with Christianity, is the last and present representative of this primeval custom.

It is also worthy of passing note that our hymns of to-day are an outgrowth of the old-time chants that were intoned in praise of the dead.

Where did they believe that these souls went after death? At first they would naturally haunt the places that they had been accustomed to while living, and so they believed that they were all about them; and, if they were enemies, they prayed to be delivered from their power, tried to propitiate their wrath. If they were friends, they rejoiced in their presence, and expected from them guidance and help. But by and by a tribe would move from its old habitat. Perhaps it first lived at the mouth of a river, and afterwards it would wander up the course of this river a hundred or two hundred miles; and then they would think of the soul of the dead as going back to the old home. That is one of the most tender and touching things connected with this old thought, and to be found throughout the entire history of the race. The place where the souls go is thought of as home: heaven is home.

So, among these primitive ancestors, after they had wandered up the river, when it came to the time of burial, they would put the body of their friend in a boat, and send it adrift on the tide, so that it might go back to the old home. And, when they had wandered inland, they would still bury the body in a boat, or something bearing the semblance of

a boat, so persistent are these religious ideas and practices when once they become a part of the thought and life of the world.

But almost every conceivable place came to be looked upon after a while, among some of the primeval peoples, as the abode of the dead. You remember reading in "Hiawatha" how the hero set sail out over a lake in the track of the setting sun, and goes down towards those islands of the blessed, which perhaps had been created out of the clouds made glorious in the last rays of even. In Northern lands the glories of the auroral lights have been connected with the homes of departed spirits. Among other peoples they have trodden the path of the Milky Way to some far place in the sky. Among other people there has been an abode beneath the surface of the earth. A thousand shapes this imaginative, loving trust of the world has taken, providing places where every want would be satisfied, where the tears should be all wiped away, where was to be no more sorrow, no more care, no more trouble, where every instinctive wish and desire should find its legitimate satisfaction.

No matter what the form may have been that these dreams and hopes have assumed, the one thing that I wish to impress upon you this morning, as of more importance than anything else, is the simple fact that the very earliest men of the world should have believed. I think there is no exception: no tribe so ignorant, so degraded, so low, so uncultured has been found that it did not hold in some form the belief that there was that in man which death could not touch.

Is this delusion, or is it a whisper of the Eternal Spirit suggesting comfort and hope to his mortal children? Is it a will-o'-the-wisp that plays over marshes that cannot sustain the feet of those that pursue, leading only into darkness and distress; or is it, far away down the pathway of history, beyond the mists that rise over the twilight of the early world,— is it the first glimpse and gleam of a dawn,

the dawn of a day that is destined to grow brighter and brighter until all darkness has disappeared?

Father, we are in Thy hands. Thou hast created us. Thou hast given us life; and we dare to trust that this mysterious consciousness of Thee partakes of Thy spirituality and Thy deathlessness. And so we cherish these magnificent hopes, and believe that they promise something better than as yet we can dream.

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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

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It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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THE REBIRTH OF CHRIST.

My text you may find in the twentieth chapter of the Gospel according to John, the second verse,— "They have taken away the Lord." My purpose is to show how the process of taking away the Lord from the consciousness, the thought, the love, the inspiration, of men has been going on for hundreds of years, and how at last, in this modern world, there has begun a process by which he is being brought back, restored to us again; and this process may be appropriately on Christmas morning referred to as the rebirth of the Christ.

You are familiar with the fact that, when a man becomes famous, even to-day, there straightway begins a process of myth-making concerning him. The popular imagination plays around him. He becomes idealized, transformed, until the actual historic man is in danger of being lost. For example, take the case of George Washington. He has been taken away,— the real, living, breathing Washington, the Washington that had his peccadilloes and faults, the Washington that could get flaming angry on occassion, the Washington whose wrath could burst out in words that on common lips would be perhaps inexcusably profane,— this kind of George Washington has been lost from the common consciousness of the people; and we are grateful to-day for Mr. Paul Leicester Ford, who has published a book entitled "The Real George Washington," giving him back to us again. For it must never be forgotten that the real man, with his faults and weaknesses, is the source of greater inspiration, strength, and comfort than any idealized figure can ever be.

A similar process has been going on in regard to Lincoln. I have witnessed this process in certain minds myself. Lincoln, for example, held certain opinions. He spoke certain words. He was accustomed to do certain things. Well now, here is a man who is writing or talking about Lincoln; and he says, It can't be possible that Lincoln really said such a commonplace or rough or even coarse thing as that. He couldn't have done it. Why? Why, my ideal Lincoln wouldn't have done it. And so the real Lincoln begins gradually to be taken away from us; and we are getting a painted figure to stand in place of the man of flesh and blood. And so I, for one, am grateful to a man like Herndon, who did not hesitate to paint his weaknesses and his faults, saying that he was great enough, magnificent enough, to have the truth told about him.

These simply as illustrations of the kind of process that is constantly going on in regard to great men. And much more do they go on concerning those supreme men of history who have been the founders of religions, the creators of new civilizations, the men who have marked the turning-points and epochs of human advance.

I wish, if I may, in some rapid outline, to show to you the process by which the man Jesus, true son of God, true son of man, our friend, our brother, the peasant of Nazareth, the teacher of Galilee,— the process, I say, by which he, as the ages went by, has been hidden away from the real thought, consciousness, love, and life of the race; and then I want to indicate to you some of the processes by which we are getting him back again, and hint the wonderful, the magnificent gain of this rebirth.

The process which culminated in taking Jesus away from us began a good many hundred years before he was born. I think you will see with simplicity and clearness what I mean as I proceed. The first step in taking our Lord away began in the national traditions of the Hebrews hundreds of years before he was born. In other words, by a

perfectly natural process, which it is easy for us to trace, the Hebrews came to believe that a Messiah, a specially chosen one, was to come in the future and restore the fortunes of the race. This was not peculiar to the Hebrew people alone: they were not the only ones who expected a Messiah. A similar expectation is found in a hundred different directions, and it grew out of a perfectly natural process of thought. The Jews said to themselves, We are the chosen people of God, therefore we shall be prosperous, we shall be great, we shall be guided, we shall be led and cared for by him; and so, when calamity came upon them, and they lost their national power, their independence, they concluded it was because they failed in some way to please the Guide and Guardian in heaven, and they came to believe that the future would see the coming and birth of some distinguished representative of their people who would fulfil the national hopes, who would keep the promise that they believed God had made to the fathers. And, as David stood for all that was great and glorious in the monarchy of the past, their national dream at last took the shape that in the future the kingdom of David was to be restored, that some one was to be born in the line of David, as his representative, who should reign with a power and glory which even the old-time kingdom did not attain.

And so, as the years went by and the darkness increased and their troubles gathered about them, the intensity of their faith in the coming deliverer only grew; and every time that a great man appeared the cry went up, "Perhaps this is he." You remember how certain ones — representatives of the people — came to Jesus, and said, "Art thou he that should come, or must we look for another?" People were alive, on tiptoe with expectation, waiting for the coming deliverer.

Here, then, began the process. Now note the second step. After Jesus was born, when he showed himself a man of such sweetness and power, when the people began to

flock after him, as the unconventional and comforting and helpful words fell from his lips, the thought grew up that he must be the one who was to fulfil the national hope, who was to realize the national ideal. And then began the process of misapplied prophecy which was the next step in the process of taking away from us our Lord.

It is very unfortunate — I may surprise some of you by saying this — that the Hebrew word, Nabi, came to be translated "prophet" at all; for the meaning of the word in the Hebrew was not one who foretells, who prophesies, in the popular meaning of that word. The Nabi was simply a proclaimer, a preacher, one who delivered a divine message, who spoke for God to the people. And, if you read all the prophets, so called, you will find that the amount of foretelling that there is in these prophecies is really very small, indeed; and you will find also, if you will study the matter carefully,— and this perhaps will surprise you,— that there is not a single case of foretelling anywhere in the Old Testament that was ever fulfilled with any literalness. There is no prophecy there except that kind of prophecy which is perfectly human and natural, which sees a certain process going on, and says, If this continues, such and such things will happen. There is no definite statement of foretelling in the Old Testament that was ever fulfilled.

But after Jesus came to be regarded as the Messiah, years after his death, then this idealizing process that I speak of began, and was carried on; and the history of his life was shaped in the light of the idea that he was the Messiah.

How does it happen, for example, that it is popularly supposed to-day that he was born in Bethlehem? It is certain beyond all rational question that he was born in Nazareth. How is it that tradition says that he was born in Bethlehem? Simply because Bethlehem was the city of David, and the expected Messiah was to be born in the city of David. So, when Jesus came to be looked upon as the

Messiah, it was concluded that he must have been born there; and his history was written in the light of this preconceived idea.

And so all the way through the facts of the life of Jesus were shaped by this idealizing process to fit a theory, to make him something other than the mere manly, magnificent prophet and leader and radical that he really was.

The next step in the process was a perfectly natural one, lovely in its spirit. It was the exaggeration that love and worship and devotion show when dealing with the objects of their love. It was a common thing at that particular period in the history of the world, as every student knows, to deify great men. Jesus is not the only one that illustrates the fact of apotheosis. Plato, for example, was fabled for a time to have been born of a virgin. Alexander, you know, was declared to be the son of a god. All kings and emperors almost claimed divine descent; and the result of this claim of divine descent naturally and necessarily is the modern claim of the divine right of kings. All the Cæsars were deified and worshipped as soon as they were dead; and even during the lifetime of Augustus this process of deification went on; and the whole Roman Empire along the highways and at its cross-roads was covered with the images, the shrines, of the emperor, just as in Catholic countries to-day you see crucifixes and Madonnas at every turn. The worship of the emperor was the popular cult of the time; the idea being that, if a man was great, if he had done anything remarkable, he must be something more than human, he must be something different from ordinary men, different not only in degree, but different in kind.

And so this came to be a natural process by which love and admiration attempted to exalt and glorify its object. So that the process of exalting Jesus, of saying that he must have been something more than the son of Joseph and of Mary, he must have been something different from a peasant of Galilee,— this process was perfectly natural; and it has

gone on in regard to no end of other great leaders and teachers in the history of mankind.

Take Gautama, the Buddha, for example. See how the popular feeling works. Gautama taught practically atheism; that is, he did not believe in the gods of his people and his time, and he put no other gods in the place of them. He lived a life of magnificent devotion, self-sacrifice, teaching some of the highest and finest morality of the world; and what was the result? After his death he himself is placed in the vacant thrones of the gods against whom he had directed his teaching. So that more millions than there are in all Christendom to-day are worshipping the Prince Gautama, practically, as a god.

This, I say, in certain stages of human evolution is the perfectly natural way in which the love and admiration of men for its heroes find expression.

Then there was another step in this process; and this was the step of philosophical speculation. In the years after the death of Jesus, after they had decided that he was the Messiah whom the Jews had looked for,— although he did not fill the old Jewish Messianic idea in one single particular, and so, as I believe, the Jews were perfectly justified in rejecting the claim that he was the Messiah for whom they had been waiting — after, however, this had been decided upon, and the process of exaltation had gone on until they said, He used to live in heaven before he came down to earth voluntarily to engage in the work of deliverance from sin and sorrow and wrong,— after this process went on, there came a philosophical problem which the Fathers and thinkers and teachers of the Church found themselves called upon to solve. They found themselves teaching that God was spirit, so far removed from matter, from the world, that he could practically have nothing whatever to do with it. They had gotten themselves into this sort of dilemma. They taught that matter was evil, that the soul is imprisoned here in the body, and that out of this bodily imprisonment sprang

all error, all wrong. But now they must devise some way, if the world was to be saved, by which to get God and man into practical relations with each other. How could this infinite, good spirit have anything to do with matter? How could the souls prisoned in the flesh be brought into actual contact and communion with the infinite spirit that inhabited eternity? Here was a problem,— a problem, let me say, unreal, a problem based in no fact, a problem springing out of a misconception of the actual nature of God, the actual nature of man, and the actual relations between them. But a real problem to that age, because they had come to accept these great beliefs as fundamental. What, then, must they do?

There was no other way but that there should be a being who should combine the divine and human natures in one, and so bridge over this infinite gulf of separation that yawned between the perfectly good God and a lost world; and out of this speculation sprang the theory of the two natures in Christ, that made him at last the second person in the divine Trinity.

This was the kind of process that went on philosophically, so that here were these different steps. There were two more, which I must touch on very briefly.

We know that in the process of building up this dogma of the Deity of Jesus, the Scriptures, those of the New Testament, were deliberately tampered with. Passages which are now admitted by all scholars to be spurious were inserted into the New Testament. That famous passage which was used for ages as an absolutely final proof text, which tells about the three witnesses on earth and the three in heaven,— this is now known by every scholar to be no part of the original text. The text, then, was deliberately tampered with in the interests of certain doctrinal ideas; and not only were passages inserted which did not belong in the original Scriptures, but certain verses in the original Scriptures themselves were changed. Note how subtle one

of them is, for example. There was a passage in the old manuscripts which spoke of the parents of Jesus, referring to Joseph and Mary. Do you not see, the parents of Jesus? If it were said frankly in a verse in the New Testament that Joseph and Mary were the parents of Jesus, then that whole later growth and addition would be completely contradicted. How get over the dilemma? Somebody, we do not know who, changed the passage so that it read no longer "the parents of Jesus," but "Joseph and his mother," leaving, you see, a wide-open gate for the entrance of the largest kind of supernatural dogma.

Processes of this sort, then, were going on in those times when the belief about Jesus was changing, so as to take him away from us, the real Jesus, and hide him from the heart and the thought and the life of men.

One other thing I must refer to. It has always been a problem to me, and one which I cannot even now decide. I do not know whether the persons in King James's time who translated the Bible did it deliberately, or whether they thought it was pardonable, or whether they overlooked what they were doing, the significance of it,— I am not sure. I am amazed at those who are the makers of the Revised Version, that they have not made the matter clear. One of the most important steps in taking away Jesus from us is in the mistranslating of a title in the New Testament. Jesus was referred to as *kurios* in the Greek: it is translated "Lord." This would be all very well, were it not for the fact that the word *Adonai*, which means God, and is everywhere in the Old Testament understood to refer to the Almighty, were not also translated "Lord." The impression to the English reader always is that the same word that stands for God the Almighty, the Omnipotent, in the Old Testament, is generally and frequently applied to Jesus in the New Testament, which is utterly untrue. The word *kurios* is merely a title of respect. It is "Sir" or it is "Lord," in precisely the same sense that Lord Salisbury is Lord.

And yet the ordinary reader of the Bible is utterly misled in regard to this matter; and he will point triumphantly to the fact that Jesus is everywhere spoken of in the New Testament in the same way that God is spoken of in the Old. He would not be if the Bible were correctly translated in this respect.

These are hints, then, of the series of processes by which our Lord has been taken away,—the real Lord, the real Jesus of Nazareth, teacher, leader, child of God, friend of man.

Let me illustrate the process and the work of modern criticism in trying to restore Jesus to us, by an anecdote with which you are probably familiar. We know at the present time of a wonderfully fine portrait of Dante, which for a long time was hidden away and lost. People knew there had been such a portrait; but nobody knew where it was. At last it was discovered on a wall, completely hidden away. Dust and smoke and soil of one kind and another had gathered, until the picture was defaced and disfigured; and then some careless person, not appreciating the value of this great work of art, in the interest of cleanliness, whitewashed the whole thing over, and the picture was lost. By and by, as the result of careful, loving research, it was discovered that the picture was probably in such and such a place; and then the artists began, speck by infinitesimal speck, to remove the whitewash and the grime and the smoke, anxious lest they should deface or disfigure any slightest particle of the priceless work that was hidden away. And after a while Dante was brought back, the wonderful picture was restored, and the world came into possession of its treasure that for so long had been hidden away.

Now this, friends, though so often misunderstood, is precisely the process of modern criticism in attempting to get at the realities of the past. There are persons who suppose that the critic is an enemy of truth, that he is a man who likes to tear things to pieces, a man who delights in inter-

fering with the reverences and the devoutnesses of people, a man with no worship in him, no care for the tender things of the past.

I am aware that there are critics who show not the finest taste nor the best workmanship. There may be critics who are under the influence of a bias, as well as other people; but the great work of the criticism of the world is this patient, is a devoted, loving attempt to get at the truths that have been covered up, that have been hidden away, that have been lost sight of, to restore them to the possession and the reverence of mankind.

And so criticism,— studying Hebrew tradition, studying comparative religions, studying the conditions of the time of the Cæsars when belief in the dogma of the Trinity grew up, studying the method by which the Scriptures have come into their present condition, studying church tradition, studying ancient manuscripts, attempting to restore the original manuscripts so far as possible, to get the correct readings,— criticism in all these directions has not been at work carelessly. It has not wanted to destroy. It has not acted in a spirit of irreverence. It has, with the most painstaking and tender, worshipful care, tried to find the very truth of God; and though there may be a man under a bias here, or a man illogical and uncritical in the true sense of the word there, yet, as the result of the work of them all put together,— one correcting the fault of another,— we have been able to reconstruct the past, and to find the precious treasures of the world that for so long had been lost to the thought and the love of man.

This is what has been going on, then, in regard to Jesus; and this is what I have ventured to refer to this morning as the process of the rebirth of Christ. We are getting back the real Jesus. What was he? I believe, friends, that he was a man, born just as we are born, with a human father and a human mother,— born in that little hill-town of Nazareth in Galilee, but born dowered in some mysterious and magnificent

way as Shakspere was,— Shakspere, born in the little hovel cottage of ignorant parents, in a little country town in England. How do you account for him? I don't account for him. How do you account for Plato? I don't account for him. How do you account for a mountain peak? Why a mountain peak in this particular place rather than somewhere else? We can ask questions forever. It is not so very easy answering them; but it is no more necessary for us to get out of the range of the human in order to account for Jesus than it is to get out of the range of the human in order to account for Shakspere.

Do you, then, says some one, put all men on a level, so that Jesus is nothing more than any other man? A foolish and inconsiderate question, though one very frequently asked. Because I say that Shakspere was a poet, and because some people say that Tupper was a poet, does that put them both on the same level? There are ranges of degree, though there may be likeness in kind.

So this Jesus,— this wonder-child, born as every other wonder-child has been, of the love of two mated hearts, since the beginning of all the world,— was able to open his mind to the truth of God, and his heart to the love of God in such a way and to such a degree that there was communion between him and the Father, and he knew, felt, saw, that he was the child of God; and so there blossomed in his heart the beauty and fragrance and significance of this childhood, not for himself only, but for all mankind.

We are getting back to-day this Jesus, the friend of man, the child of the Father, the one who ate with publicans and sinners, the one who was touched with sympathy for every human sorrow, the one who folded all mankind in his arms, the man who had flaming, bitter words only for spiritual sins,— for cruelty, for oppression, for bigotry, for those things which trampled down the weak and the poor,— we are getting back this great radical, the radical leader of his

time. We are getting back this man who stood as the typical ideal man, rounded, and full of all human passion, all possibility of temptation, but with such self-mastery that he made himself the ideal of all that is divine.

We are getting back this our Lord, our master, our teacher, our inspiration, our friend. He is being born into this modern world as he never has been in the last eighteen hundred years.

Along with that, do you know what else we are getting? We are getting for the first time a real divine Fatherhood. The God of the Trinity, the first person of the Trinity, is not the universal, loving Father of all mankind. He is a partial God. He sent light and hope and peace to a few; but the great majority of the masses of mankind are left to wander and stumble in darkness. It is only when we get our Lord back, as one among many brethren, a child of God and a brother of every human soul, that we get back our Father who is in heaven,— the Father to whom Jesus prayed and in whom he trusted, whom he loved and followed and proclaimed as the Father of all mankind.

And, as we get these back, our Lord and our God, we get back what I have already hinted,— the universal hope of the race. This Christmas morning is not peculiar to New York nor America nor England. Do you know it is not peculiar to Christendom? Christmas did not originate with Christ. Christmas is not confined to the countries that offer him their reverence and worship. Christmas is old as human tradition, and as wide as the continents and the farthest islands of the sea. This old celebration,— what did it mean? It was the birth of the Sun-god; it was the coming of light; it was the death of winter, the lengthening of the days that look forward to the bloom and promise of spring; it was the triumph of warmth over cold, of light over darkness, of life over death,— the one oldest, most universal, most human, of all the festivals that men have known.

This is the real Christmas; and, as we get the real Lord back and the real God our Father, so we get the universal Christmas hope that takes in,— not the elect, not the church members, not Christians, not Christendom,— that takes in man, the one child of the one heavenly Father. So in this rebirth of Christ is the rebirth also of the dearest and sweetest and most treasured hopes of the race.

Let us, then, rejoice this morning, and give thanks to our Father that he has given us the Nazarene back again, and that along with him, no matter if they should not be so high in stature, so fair in face, and so magnificent in feature,— has given us along with him other numberless sons of God, lights and leaders of their times, the great teachers and prophets and inspirers of the race. And here speaks the true father-care,— not the partial love that devotes itself to a few select ones, but that fatherhood that seeks and saves the lost, that bestows its peculiar care upon those that are most in want, and that need most the touch of his sympathy and his love.

Father, we thank Thee for this Christmas hope, for this Christmas ideal, for all the magnificent things that it implies; the forward look towards the days that are to be. Let us cherish these things in our hearts, live them out in our lives, and so be in our sphere and degree saviors and leaders of men; and we will give Thee thanks forever. Amen.

UNITARIAN CATECHISM

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

Price, Paper, per	Copy	. . . . .	20 cents
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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands; in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

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SERIES ON

BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

II. The Beliefs of the Old-World Civilizations

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THE BELIEFS OF THE OLD-WORLD CIVILIZATIONS.

You will not expect me to undertake the impossible task of compressing, or trying to compress, within the limits of one discourse, any general treatment of so large a theme. My purpose is a much simpler one than this. It is not particularly the belief of Egypt or India or Scandinavia or Greece or Rome that I am interested in. It is the growth and changes of the belief of man; and I wish to consider these merely as phases of this human belief. And so what I have in hand just now is to note in some general way how far along in its progress the world had come when it reached the culmination of these old-time civilizations.

We first treated the ideas of primitive man. This, you see, is the next step; and after this I shall leave what we are accustomed to call the pagan world, and take up the line of historic progress that goes under the name of Hebrew and Christian civilization.

At present, then, we are to consider for a little how far the world had got at the height of the civilizations of these old-time peoples, in its development concerning its belief about death and the life that it supposed was to follow it.

One thing is worthy of our notice. The peoples of these different countries did not look upon this belief as a childish relic of the olden time, as something which barbaric people held, but which was to be outgrown and left behind. We find that the belief among these great nations was prac-

tically universal. They all held that death was not the end, but only an incident in life, leading to something beyond. But, when we speak of the belief of Egypt or of India or of any one of these other great nations, we need to keep carefully in mind one fact. Any one of these peoples had had a progress of thousands of years; and of course its beliefs in regard to these matters, as well as in any other direction, had naturally and necessarily undergone many modifications.

To illustrate what I mean: Suppose I should make some general statement about English belief concerning death and a future life. You might remind me of the fact that there were native Britons on the island before any conquest of which we know; then that the island was conquered by other peoples, bringing with them their peculiar ideas, which ultimately became amalgamated with the native thought of the old Britons. Then by and by Christianity came and conquered the original Paganism: it was Catholic Christianity. This was followed by the Protestant Revolution; this by the rise of free thought, the scientific spirit, agnosticism, and all the speculations of modern times. So you might very well ask me, when I refer to English belief, what period of English belief I have in mind; for there are many English beliefs. But I do not need to do more than remind you of this fact. I do not want you to think I have carelessly overlooked it. It will be enough for my purpose to refer to some general outlines of the faith of these great peoples at certain periods of their most advanced civilization.

I wish now to make to you some suggestions concerning the nature of the places where the souls of the dead were supposed to have gone. I want, in other words, to bring imaginatively before you, if I can, some suggestive and sufficient picture of this other life which these people believed in. I can only give you a few illustrative hints.

The Egyptian religion is based on and is always con-

nected with astronomical studies; and, when the Egyptians came to believe in these other worlds for the souls of the dead, they connected them popularly with the circuit of the sun. The good souls either accompanied the sun in his progress or lived somewhere along the course of the sun's daily advance, while the bad were connected with his transit through the world of darkness and shadows preparatory to his daily course again.

The Scandinavians had for their heroes and great fighters the Hall of Valhalla, where the souls fought over again the battles in which they so delighted here. They drank the celestial mead, and celebrated their deeds of renown. But this was not the only heaven that the Norsemen knew. They believed in a Hall of Friends, where quiet and gentle souls found an abode of peace. There was a place where the noble women of the world received the reward for their lives of faithfulness and devotion. They also, of course, with all these nations at the highest period of their development, had their places of sorrow and suffering, and sometimes of torture for those who had offended the gods or who had wronged their fellow-men.

The Indian peoples believed in heavens and hells, both located in some indefinite region of space,— heavens where the good rested during the periods that separated the times of their different births. There were also hells where the bad awaited the new and worse fate that was to come to them by being born into some hideous, diseased, or animal form.

The Persians also had their heavens and their hells. The Greeks and the Romans, with which, perhaps, we are more familiar than with either of these others, located the underworld always beneath the surface of the earth. It was a place to which descent might conceivably be made. Some living person, as in the case of Æneas and Ulysses, might go down and visit those who were the inhabitants of this lower world. It was then always an underground cavern

with the classic people where the good and bad went; for, except in the case of some highly favored souls, semi-divine heroes who were transferred to Olympus and were companions of the gods, no one ever "went to heaven" in the sense in which we are at the present time accustomed to use that term.

These realms, then, as I said, were either under the surface of the earth or off somewhere in the interstellar spaces. But we must bear in mind, if we wish to have any adequate thought of these old-time ideas, that the universe up to within four hundred years of the present time has been comparatively a very small affair. The entire universe as it was thought of by the Greeks and Romans, for example, was not so large, not nearly so large, as we imagine the solar system to be. The stars were not so very far away. Heaven was just above the dome of blue. And you are aware of the traditions that made people think that it might be possible for some hero to scale heaven and threaten the stability of the throne of Jupiter himself.

These merely as hints of the comparative sizes of the universe of the old time and the present.

Now I wish you to note further some peculiar facts in regard to the nature of the soul,— the inhabitants of these other worlds. There are persons at the present time who, under the name of theosophy, have resurrected, or suppose themselves to have resurrected, certain phases of Buddha's Oriental ideas, who talk to us about shells and astral bodies as separate possibly from the central soul of man. It is very curious to note that in Greek and Latin mythology, as well as under the Egyptians and some of the other ancient nations, ideas akin to these were held.

For example, when Ulysses goes down to the underworld, among others that he meets there is the shade of Hercules; and this shade is able to talk with him. He has indeed a shadowy life, but substance enough to carry on a conversation with the living hero; and yet, according to

the teaching of the thought of the time, the real Hercules, a demigod, had been transferred to Olympus, and was there living in companionship with the gods. So that, in a certain sense, you see there were two of him.

Among the Egyptians also we find there was an unreal sort of shadow that sometimes haunted the tomb, or in some indefinite way was connected with the mummy, while the real soul was in one of the heavens or hells, receiving the rewards or undergoing the punishments of the life he had lived here below the stars.

Souls, therefore, were somewhat bountifully supplied; and one of them could be in one place, while another was somewhere else. It reminds us of the Scotch traditions concerning the wraith, or apparition, which may be seen wandering over the heather while the owner is alive, and presumably has his body and soul both with him wherever he may be. But this life which they lived was a very shadowy one. Of course, we cannot reconcile it with any reasonable philosophical speculation of the modern world. When Æneas talks with his father Anchises in this underworld, the old man can weep, can speak in a voice that can be heard. He remembers the past, he forecasts the future; and yet, when the son endeavors to embrace him, there is no substance there, and his arms pass through the form as if it were merely a shadow.

These people in the underworld, again, are ordinarily supposed to be ignorant of what is taking place on the surface of the earth; and yet they have not forgotten the past. They are intensely interested in it. They are glad to hear news of their children, their descendants. They are proud if they have attained prosperity. They are cast down with sadness if they do not live lives which they regard as worthy, or indeed if anything unfortunate has befallen them. Ignorant then generally as to what has taken place on the surface of the earth, it is still true — and I wish you to note it as a separate and distinct fact — that under special conditions it is believed

that communications may be established between the underworld and the world up here where the sun shines. The way is usually closed. It is difficult for a spirit to come up the surface of the earth. It is difficult for a man to go down and mingle with the shades. But there are conditions in which it is possible. This is worthy of attention, because there never has been a time that we can trace from the beginning of human thought on this subject, when a belief like this has not held. I do not say now that it is important. I do not dwell upon it. I wish simply to call it to your careful attention.

We come now to trace three or four very important things in connection with the beliefs of these people concerning the future. And, in the first place, I wish you to note that the thought of evolution as connected with death had not entered their minds. They did not regard death as a step in advance. They did not have any forward and upward looking idea or hope connected with it. It was a sad necessity to them. At first there was no ethical idea connected with it. They did not regard it as a punishment; but it was a sad fact that men must die. They did not look forward to it with any anticipation of joy. They pitied those who were obliged to go down into this gloomy and half unreal world of shades; and they looked forward to the necessity of it in their own case, as most of us do to-day, as something to be postponed and avoided by every possible means in their power.

I wish to touch on two or three illustrative phases of this belief. There are a good many persons in the modern world who are coming to accept the idea of reincarnation as though it were something desirable, as though it solved the problems and helped them settle some of the practical difficulties of life. Remember, then, that in India, both among the Brahmins and among the Buddhists, it was not a welcome thought. It was held, indeed, almost universally. All men believed that they had existed before, and that they

would exist — nobody knew how many times — again. Perhaps in the past they had been kings, or beggars; they had been diseased and crippled outcasts; they had been people of wealth and consideration; they had occupied almost every conceivable position in society. Not only had they been men, perhaps they had been elephants, perhaps they had been apes, perhaps they had been flies or gnats or serpents; for the kinship of the human and the sub-human was held in India to such an extent that this sort of transformation was not only believed to be possible, but to be actual, and constantly going on. If a man had lived a noble life, he might expect to be born in some higher station after a brief respite in some one of the heavens. If he had lived a bad life, he looked forward to being born in some poorer and meaner condition. And it was not possible for him to balance the good and the bad, to say, "There has been more good in my life than there has been bad," and so have something on his credit account. No matter how bad he had been, if he had been bad at all, that badness must be expiated to the letter in some rebirth that was to follow.

So you see the prospect that awaited them. They could look forward to no rest. There had been thousands, possibly millions of births in the past; and there awaited them thousands, perhaps millions, of births in the future. They did not know how many; and, as they looked forward to it, it seemed an interminable and wearisome round.

The Hindus and the Buddhists, I say, did not anticipate this fate with joy. They did not look forward to it even with resignation; for the one sole object of the Brahman religion was to live so as to attain such wisdom as to enable the soul to escape this horrible necessity of being continually reborn. The one thing to look forward to was that he might, after nobody knew how long, attain absorption in Brahma, lose the consciousness of personal identity, forget to think, forget to hope, to desire, to fear, and so

share in some impersonal way the felicity of the infinite and eternal spirit.

So this fate was what the Brahmin was trying to escape; and the Buddhist was engaged in the same effort. He had a different philosophy, looked upon the universe in a different way; but he believed also in this eternal, weary round of rebirths. And the one thing that Gautama was after was to show his followers the path — to what? The path out of this fearful necessity into Nirvana. And what was Nirvana? Scholars are still disputing over it; but it was either the loss of self-consciousness, the attainment of eternal calm, or else it was something so near unconsciousness that the most careful students find themselves unable to draw any thinkable distinction.

The Brahmins, then, and the Buddhists did not anticipate the next life, except as they looked afar off with an ever-sustained hope to the possibility of losing individual existence and sharing in the supposed impersonal felicity of the Eternal.

The Greeks and the Romans again looked upon this other life, not as something to be desired, but to be dreaded. It was the loss of all they cared for. If you get the picture of it in your minds, you will see how undesirable it must have been. They went down into this underground shadowy world. They no longer saw the sun, nor the stars at night. They no longer felt the breezes of heaven fanning their fevered brows. They no longer felt the pulsing of the blood in their veins, the free beating of it in their hearts. There was no longer this real flesh-and-blood existence. There was no longer glad consciousness of power on the part of the athlete, the ability to engage in the struggles of war or the peaceful strifes of the arena. There was no longer the reality of love and friendship such as they had enjoyed in the olden days. It was a shadowy, unreal sort of world where they lived over again in seeming their memory of what they had cared for in the olden time.

As an illustration of the way it is looked on, I wish to read you one brief passage from the Odyssey. Ulysses has been permitted to go down to this underworld; and he meets there Achilles, the great hero of the ancient world, and in the midst of their conversation he thus addresses him: —

> . . . . "But as for thee,
> Achilles, no man lived before thy time,
> Nor will hereafter live, more fortunate
> Than thou,— for while alive we honored thee
> As if thou wert a god, and now again
> In these abodes thou rulest o'er the dead.
> Therefore, Achilles, shouldst thou not be sad,"—
> I spake. Achilles quickly answered me: —
> "Noble Ulysses, speak not thus of death,
> As if thou wouldst console me. I would be
> A laborer on earth, and serve for hire
> Some man of mean estate, who makes scant cheer,
> Rather than reign o'er all who have gone down
> To death."

You see Achilles looked upon this matter in such a way that he would rather be a common day laborer up here under the skies than to be a king of all the inhabitants of the world of shades.

Let us now take one more step, and see that at first there was no ethical idea associated with this fact of death. By that I mean something twofold. First, they did not explain the fact of death ethically. It had no moral significance. And, in the next place, they had no developed doctrines of rewards or punishments. Let us consider both of these as briefly as we may and at the same time make them clear.

Men at first took death as a sad fact which they could not avoid; but they did not attempt to explain it in any philosophical way. They did not believe in natural death. They did not see why it should be inevitable at first; and they always held to the belief that, when a man died, it was

always because somebody had killed him. But by and by, when they saw that death was universal, they began to see that some general fate hung over them. But they did not regard it as a punishment for anything which they had done. They simply accepted it because they had to, without explanation.

And you will find that in the early thinking of all these peoples there was in the next world no division between the good and the bad. All went to one place. Death was a sufficient punishment for evil; and it was some inexplicable thing that also came upon the good. There was no heaven and no hell in the early thinking of these peoples. But by and by, as the moral sense grew, you will see that they inevitably sought some moral explanation of these strange facts. So at last it came about that death was looked on as a punishment for human sin.

Among the Persians, for example, men were created with the intention that they should live here on earth for some indefinite period, and then be transferred, without dying, to the abodes of the gods.

There was in the Persian theology one great original Power, and under him two gods in age-long antagonism,— the god of darkness, the god of evil, and the god of good and of light,— of apparently equal power. They were matched in an age-long contest; and it was because men took sides with Ahriman, the god of darkness and evil, that he was made, as a punishment, subject to death, which had not been a part of the original creative plan. But in this Persian theology, it is well for us to remember, there were none of the horrors which humanity has imagined in some of these later centuries. There were age-long hells, but all the hells were some time to come to an end. Even Ahriman himself, the bad god, and the prototype of the Christian devil, was to be converted and become subject to the deity of light and of good. So that ultimately peace and purity and blessedness were to reign.

In the Egyptian theology we find some of the noblest teaching anywhere to be discovered in the world. In their Book of the Dead, which recounts the trial of the soul and its apportionment either to bliss or to misery, there are some of the highest and finest ethical teachings to be found in any religious composition on earth. The souls are judged with absolute impartiality as to what they are and what they have done, and they go their way into light or darkness as the just assignment of an impartial judge. But again, in Egypt, the hells are not to last forever. Punishment was not eternal.

Among the Greeks and Romans death has not been generally explained as the result of any sin on the part of man. They all at first went down into the underworld. But, when we come to the highest and finest development of their conceptions of the other life, we find that this underworld is divided into two. There is Elysium, where the good are as happy as any of the dead can be; and there is Tartarus, the place where the very wicked are tortured and punished. But it is worth our careful consideration that, generally,— and this, you will see, chimes in remarkably with ordinary Christian dogma,— the bad were punished, not so much because they were bad to their fellow-men, but for some outrage to the gods, some impiety towards them. They had offended some deity or had profaned some altar, some temple, some sacrifice.

You will see, then, that the growth of ethical ideas concerning the next life keeps pace, and very naturally, with the growth of ethical ideas generally here among men.

There is one other thought now to which I must ask your consideration; and that is that there came a time, and that the time of the highest civilization of these ancient peoples, when scepticism began to come in and invade these hitherto universally accepted beliefs. And there is one principle so important that I must ask you to give it your special attention,— a principle of age-long application, the

principle which in changed conditions and in regard to changed ideas we are facing to-day.

There is always, at any period of human advance, a great belief, a belief like this that the soul continues after death alive. Then what? Then there is an intellectual way of stating that belief. There is the formal framework of ideas in which the belief is set. There is the imaginative picture of that other world and of the soul that inhabits it, of its conditions there.

Now I wish you to carefully separate these two ideas. It is possible for people to hold a belief which is vital and true; and at the same time it is possible for them to give that belief an intellectual statement which is absurd. So that, as people become wiser and think more carefully about it, they find themselves under the necessity of rejecting it. And then what happens? Why, what is happening right here to-day. The priests, the teachers, the theologians, have so associated the real belief and its intellectual statement as to make them seem necessary to each other, almost parts of each other, practically identical. So that, when a person finds himself unable any longer to hold the intellectual statement of the belief, he feels that he is losing the belief itself, because he has been taught for ages that the two are inseparably bound together.

Now the statement which these barbaric peoples had framed of the nature of the soul, the place of its abode, its rewards and punishments,— this statement was cruel, was ignorant, because it grew up in cruel and ignorant times. But it became consecrated as a part of religion, and the priests did not dare to change it; and it came to be associated in the minds of those who held it with the belief itself. But, as people grew more and more educated, were able to think more clearly and logically, the Olympus, crowned with the gods, became an absurd detail that no sensible man could believe. The kind of souls that they had talked about they could no longer accept; and the

heavens and the hells came to be questionable, so that the belief in immortality itself began to be questioned,— not by bad people, not by ignorant people,— ignorant and bad people are generally soundly orthodox in all ages of the world: they began to be questioned by the thoughtful and best educated, the best people, because, as I said, intelligence could no longer believe these traditional statements about the gods and the souls and the heavens and the hells.

And so what do we find? We find, for example, in the noblest period of Roman history, Julius Cæsar, high priest, Pontifex Maximus, the official head of the Roman religion, believing neither in the gods nor in any future life. We find the augurs, men engaged in carrying out the details of the national religion, so it is said, not looking in each other's faces while they were about it, lest they should laugh, because it had come to seem to them unreal and absurd. We find a writer like Lucian — read him if you have time, there is a very good translation — almost, perhaps, an ancient duplicate of Colonel Ingersoll to-day. He was witty, gifted with a power of satire and ridicule that has rarely been matched, and, as we would say, poking infinite fun at the whole business,— ridiculing the gods, ridiculing the other life, all the popular beliefs of his time, and making them so ridiculous that any person who carefully thought would find it impossible to hold them in those old ways any longer.

So this inevitable period of scepticism came. And it will come in every age inevitably, so long as the priests and the leaders in the religious life insist upon creating fictitious infallibilities. Fit out any set of ideas with the attribute of infallibility, and, when they are outgrown, you will have an inevitable period of scepticism. The only way to escape it is to keep thought free, so that, while people cherish the inner and central faith of their religion, the form may take infinite liberty in changing and adapting itself to the intellectual conditions of the time.

Socrates, Plato, Plutarch, Cicero, Seneca, and their fellows speculated, talked, and wrote about these great questions very much as thoughtful men have been doing ever since their time. They believed or they doubted and tried to believe. They hoped and they sought and attempted to give consolation in face of the inevitable fate. To-day we find their arguments strong or weak, according as the trend of our own thinking leads. They witness, at any rate, to the inextinguishable thirst of the human soul for an answer to its eternal question.

There swept, then, over the ancient world a great wave of doubt as to the reality of any future life; but I want you to note carefully that this doubt did not necessarily touch the innermost heart of the belief, only its outward forms, its statements. And I wish you to note, further, that these intellectual discussions did not disturb or upset the great deep-down faiths of the common people. These waited for some period when there should be a larger and clearer conception that should clothe these old trusts, and make them once more acceptable to the philosophers, the scientists, and the scholars of the time.

Now, our Father, this great belief, born with the beginning of man, growing, changing, passing through a thousand transformations, finds lodgment in our hearts this morning; and, as the years come and the years go, we think of Thee to whom a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is past; we think of Thee as our Father and as our God, and as the God, not of the dead, but of the living, and trust that we all live unto Thee. Amen.

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THE WORTH OF I WILL.

"I said I will take heed to my way."— PSALM xxxix. 1.

AND I must do this because my ways are the truest test I can find of my own manhood. They underlie my words, if it is my mission in this world to say things; and, if it is my mission to do things, they lie within my doing. They are to my manhood, indeed, what the wheels and springs in my watch are to the hands on the dial. They reveal my life soon or late, as it opens to the world and to heaven, and are the only evidence the court will care for when the question is asked, "What hast thou done?" down to the close of the year, which has passed into the eternal silence now, and what I may offer for excuse of my poor attainment is bared to the bone.

For I can see how this must be true, because I know that no man of my make, or of yours who hear me, ever fails to pass true judgment finally on himself or any woman. We know better than the whole world besides how poor the plea must be that we could not help this or that transgression of the holy laws when we stand at this bar to answer for the deeds or the misdeeds done in the body. I know of myself that I could always find the place where God had hidden the conviction nothing could slay of the power to do well, if I would only be a man; and I know it of others more than I can number, who have opened their heart to me through the many years. Or, if the power and the will to do well was clean lost out of them, they would still tell me they

could have done better once if only they had taken heed to their ways.

"If I had done this," my poor man or woman would say, "when I was myself, then I should have been all right; but now I fear it is too late." And so it is, I say, with the manhood and womanhood of my make and yours, the heirs of all the ages, and holding in our hearts this treasure as our trust from God.

The grand old dogmatist, Dr. Johnson, said: "What 's the use talking? I feel I am free, and that's the end on't." He spake for us all; and his words are in themselves a right noble ally to these,—"I will take heed to my ways," — for I am able to do this beyond all question, or I am not a man, but only a thing.

In London, away back in the last century, a clever man put on the stage a company of monkeys, trained to the drill like well-instructed soldiers. The chronicles of the time say it was a wonder to see how well the thing was done, and how very like tiny old men they were, going through the evolution there on the stage. Shoulder arms! Present arms! Ground arms! Stand at ease! Right! Left! Forward, march! Quick march!

The whole thing was perfect save for this, — that one night some man suddenly tossed a great handful of hazelnuts on the stage, and then in an instant they broke rank, came down on all fours, and began to scramble for the nuts.

It was the baseless fabric of a vision, after all. They were not men, but only monkeys. The shadow on the dial went backward a million years on the turn of the rogue's hand. The drill was not even skin-deep. They could not take heed to their ways, when nuts were to be got for the scrambling. The poor, small entities had not won what we have won through the million years,— the power and the will which answers to the word of command: they had only eyes, ears, paws, a paunch, and a stomach. Duty, drill, dis-

cipline, and a sound flogging, when the curtain came down, were of no account,— here were the nuts.

We have all known such men, and I have wondered whether this was not the missing link the scientists are looking for; but the manhood I am looking for is not of this brand, and never can be.

I heard Charles Kingsley touch the old legend in a lecture of a colony of these creatures on the shores of the Dead Sea, who had once been men; but they gave in to the nuts the evil one tossed on the stage, gave in utterly and forever. So evolution went backward, changing into *de*volution; and they were monkeys again.

We did not come here to start such a colony. We are not things, but men who can say, I *will* and I will *not*. We hold the winnings of the million years in heart and brain, in hand and foot, and can waste the treasure or win more, as we take heed to our ways, or are heedless and so fall back toward the rude and base beginnings.

Yes, and more than this. It may be true that the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge; but we can win what they lost, and more. We may have been badly born, as so many are (God help them!). But I hold the truth steadily then that we must be born again; for that is good gospel, and I know it is true.

"See to it that your children are born right the first time, and then they will not need to be born again," a hard-headed old radical used to say in our lyceum, far away in the green lands; and there was truth in the saying.

But I think the greater truth is this: that *re*generation is God's method of righting the wrong done to me in my birth, of restoring the wayward balance, invading the weakened will, and enabling me to say, I will be a whole man. While if it takes more than this to meet the lien the Most High holds on me, as this truth is set forth in the Gospel,— Be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect,— then the

saint may have to wait a thousand years for aught I know; but I will be a man in the Commonwealth of the sons of God.

The only human creature who is helpless to take heed to his ways is the only man we can never think of as we think of ourselves. He can only learn his alphabet by rote, like the four-footed thing in the museum. He wears the motley, sings scraps of old ballads, and makes jests which take on the color of shrewdness by contrast with his woful limitations. If he commits a crime, the judge never says, "Now you must punish him," but, "You must take care of him." It is because the poor waif cannot take heed to his ways, or say "no" to the nuts.

We call such a one by a name we dare not use toward each other on peril of being smitten on the mouth. The proof of our quality as men lies in the quick instinct with which we resent the suspicion that we are not *all there*, as we say; and, if the need comes, we marshal proof that this must never be said to us under pains and penalties.

Let me show, then, through twenty years that I cannot take heed to my ways. Therefore, you must take heed for me because I am a thing, while you are a man. I am as a log on the great tides of life,— drifting as the tides drift,— while you are as a ship, well manned and well found. You can take heed to your ways, and can sail as a pirate to the Corea or to Liverpool with honest papers, carry the black flag at the mast-head or the stars and stripes. But, being the man you are, if you should turn round and say, I was born to be a pirate, I could not help myself, then the power and purpose you brought to your piracy would compel the court to say: You were born to be hanged. We know you were able to take heed to your ways, because you have revealed a power through taking the wrong way equal to that honest men reveal in taking the right.

May I say, once more, that, because this is true, it opens

toward another truth we may well take to our hearts? There is a philosophy, so called, rather common in our time, which makes folly in some sort the handmaid of wisdom, and sin the broad and beaten highway which leadeth unto life, and is part and parcel, indeed, of the eternal providence which "from seeming evil still educes good,"—a sort of background by which the eternal truth shines forth with all the fairer radiance, and in which my base counterfeits prove the worth of the golden ingots of heaven.

This was the doctrine of a wandering evangelist, set forth in a sermon, as the story runs, and then asking his audience whether they would not turn out to hear him when he came that way again, was well answered, as I think, by a good old Quaker, who said, "Friend, if what thee has told us in thy sermon is not true, we do not want to hear thee again, for we are none too good in this settlement; and, if it is true, we shall not need to hear thee again, because by thy shewing we must be doing pretty well."

I see no worth save in my striving instantly to be a whole, true man. I must not do evil, that good may come. I cannot afford in this new year to be, shall we say, half man and half monkey, lest the lower half get the better of me, which means the worse, when I break rank, as so many have done, and lose not my own winnings alone, but the winnings of all the ages, and, so far as this is in my power, lose my own soul also.

The books tell me that every well-made man has the iron in his blood to make a ring. Well, I must have enough to ring me round with an iron resolution to be a whole, true man in all nobleness and pureness of life. I must realize that I am not a log, not a worm, not next of kin to the thing we saw on the stage just now, but by my birthright a child of God and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven here on the earth and in the world to come.

A venerable minister told me how Channing said to him,

"I told a lie once, and I think it did me a great deal of good." And it is told of Luther that one came to make confession of his utter vileness; but, as the burly reformer listened, it grew clear to him that the man was stricken by imagination of sins reaching back to Adam. So he said, "Go away and get drunk, and then there will be something to tell." All the same I cannot do evil, that good may come; and the Master's word is true: "Narrow is the way which leadeth unto life."

I am no Channing or Luther, and the dear son is no substitute who will make the account good for me. He is the captain. I am in the ranks; and I must stand for one true soldier, take heed to my ways, keep true step, stand fast by the banner, and endure to the end. These years of my life now are strewn with the memories of men of the finest promise, but they would not say no to the nuts with a vim which admits of no argument, they would not bend to the oars, "rowing hard against the stream," but took the drift, and the end this side the vale was the fires of doom; but I am a man, and no mere thing to be knocked back and forth between centerstance and circumstances, like a shuttlecock crowned with a feather.

Here, then, is my choice. How shall I make it good? I will try to tell you. Two men shall start out in life together, and in the heart of each there shall be a purpose touching what they will be and do in the life which lies before them; but one shall say, I am bound to succeed, and the other shall say: I am bound to *deserve* success. What I do in this world shall not be a mere business or a profession, but a *possession* that will hold me always to the heart of sincerity and truth to God and man. My work in this world shall be one with my faith, and shall blend with my life, as the leaven blends with the meal to make all sweet and wholesome. At the bar or in the pulpit, painting pictures or building bridges, forging iron and steel or making shoes and gar-

ments, busy in Wall Street or the workshop, it is all the same: I will take heed to my ways. Truth in the inward man shall be my lode-star; for Milton says, "God can never be served with a lie." So I must be a co-worker together with Him. I cannot make my craft or profession one thing and my religion another: they must blend together and be one.

I do but indicate by a stroke what purpose may lie in each man's heart. The purposes and plans are diverse as our natures are; but some purpose every man will be sure to have who has the ambition to be worth his bread and salt, who will be a unit and no mere vulgar fraction in the sum of our human life, and says, "Succeed or fail, I am bound to deserve success, and will leave the rest with the Most High God."

One man of this fine purpose was our own Saint Peter, whose risen spirit dwells within the Cooper Institute. I knew the old man; and more than once he would tell me the story of his early life,—how he took hold first of one thing and then another; taking heed to his ways, found better ways that led toward the great fortune he won and consecrated to that noble purpose we know of. And then he said, "What shall I do besides making money and dying, it may be, merely worth my millions?"

The vision came to him of what he would love to do,—the vision of our great city destined to sit enthroned on her island through the millenniums. He remembered New York when the City Hall park was a potato patch. He saw with the seers' eyes — the good gray eyes — how the emigrants would crowd here from the Old World to find room for a larger and finer life. He would found his Institute, alike for their children and the children of the home-born man, where they should be taught the noble arts who wanted to learn them after the primitive trend and passion of their nature, and create a library of noble and useful books they might read to their hearts' content.

So the beautiful vision came true; and the old man died, having received the promise, yet seeing it afar off, growing forever into finer and ampler worth. And he also loved to tell what a struggle it was, through dark and dismal times, to hold on to his purpose. But, when he was borne to his burial on that wild winter's day, the city stood in thick ranks in the storm from his home to the South Ferry in reverence, with bared heads, as the dust came near, and passed by.

The noble and beautiful foundation was built up on these terms: "I will take heed to my ways." There is a soft woollen hat down somewhere among the foundations. I speak in a figure. So I may begin, you may begin, as he did, to earn our dollar a day, to blend our faith with our work, week-day with Sunday, and be fellow-workers in the faith with the good Saint Peter who never denied his Lord.

I think of such a life as something like those grand old homes I go to see in the Motherland, where, once on a time, a man built a tower, or a keep as they would call it, with a well deep down below the foundations. Then his son added a hall and nests for the children which would drink in the sunlight, and his grandson built a bower for his bride. Then one added a chapel, and another a gallery: and so in the long years the home ripens to a perfection which leaves nothing for desire in the noble and beautiful place, while still, down deep at the centre, is the well which never runs dry.

So may our life grow beyond all our plans and purposes, if this heart is in us I would plead for, which is true to the watchword, "I will take heed to my ways."

And I love to believe that the holy watchers stand eager to see what we will make of our life through this poise and purpose, so that, when they see this heart beats in us, this wilfulness to be units in the commonwealth of God on the earth, they say, There is a man after his own heart: let us

make room for him down there, pile up noble motives about him, and splendid aspirations. So such a manhood grows from the keep to the soul's statelier mansion through the ages, as in the story I would read in my youth. One trimmed a lamp, and set it on the headland; and then the time came when the lamp had bourgeoned into a light-house, with a burning splendor which went flashing and flaming far and wide over the dark and dangerous sea.

The great German said, "Man is not the creature of circumstances, but the architect, and can use them nobly or basely in the upbuilding of his manhood"; and I would say that, when this is our plan and purpose, the Scripture will be fulfilled. "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."

Shall I touch the story of another man I hold in my memory, who said, "I am bound to deserve success," when he set out, but was lured away from his noble purpose, and came to make mere success his watchword rather than this high and true deserving. He was an artist who painted pictures, in the earlier years, which were of the fairest promise, but found no market for them, as Millet found no market, and was as poor as a church mouse before the era of church festivals. So he began to do things which would sell and make money, for he was bound to succeed.

But no more dreams now of a sea and a shore with a reach of sand, a few wild bushes, a bird flitting here, and yonder a vision of azure flecked with cloud that touched you as the sunny portals of heaven, and a sea with "the waves turn before it breaks in foam," so that you almost felt the salt spray on your cheek.

No work like this any more. There was no money in it, or the fame heaven calls infamy. He went after the nuts, and his work was shorn of the grace and the glory which endures through the ages. So that befell him which may befall us all who will not take heed to our ways; for his

whole manhood grew poor and paltry, and the inward man took the tone of the work the hands would do.

And this word is said in the deep conviction we teach who are called to this ministry, that to remand the man back to his own manhood, to put him on his pure honor, and say to him, You are not a worm, not a log, not a lump of depravity, not a child of the devil, but a son of the living God,— this is the truth we hold and teach.

Therefore, I must look out for myself as if I was the one momentous factor in the sum, and yet forever fall back on the eternal strength, as if that alone was mine, as indeed it is.

And, again, because this truth lies in the heart of any faith or any religion worth the name, a faith and a life which will hold as true the terms touched by the old prophet, "What is required of thee, O man, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" while, the more sincere and true we are in this walk with God and his Christ, the less likely we shall be to put on airs and posture before the world as saints.

The faith in the Most High, and love for Him which gives life and a soul to our noblest powers, inspires us to the noblest service, and is one in the spirit and in truth with the fine word of Plutarch touching a certain manhood in his time, that not the past, but the future, charmed them; and they were so eager to advance that they were impatient even of the good in their desire for the better.

In the small town where I was living sixty years ago, it was the custom to toll the great bell in the old church tower, when one of our number had passed through the gates of death into the immortal life; and still I remember how the usage of more than ninety generations told the story. There was one strong stroke first, and then a pause, then three strokes with another pause, and then for the space of half an hour the slow and steady toll in which

the vibration made the continuous music; for the new stroke always fell before the last had floated away. Still, the story was not told; and we waited for the rapid boom of the great bell, one stroke for each year in that human life.

The memory still comes back to me when the old year steals out and the new year steals in. I am listening to the great bell in the far-away time, and the vibration is still in the air, listening and waiting for the full tale to be told. And, as I count the strokes for the many years of my own life, the question touches me, What have you done in these years, and what will you do with the time that remains, the one stroke or more as it shall please God on the great bell?

There is but one answer,— the answer we must all make as this new year steals in, when we use our divine gift of looking backward, and ask what worth abides in the record the years have made.

It is told of Benjamin West that in the last year of his life he said, "I can find nothing I have done in all the years to alter or amend." It was more than I can say or than you can say, it may be; but, as we see where we have failed, we can say, I will take heed to my ways, and the last shall be the best.

I remember Theodore Parker's widow told me, with a noble and pathetic pride, that, when his life was ebbing away, he was still eager to write new sermons and books better than any he had done.

And I mind a talk with our noble Bayard Taylor, near the end of his radiant life, in which he said, "I have tried to make my last poem the truest; but there is another to be done, the best of them all."

And I have read that, when a very noble artist lay on his death-bed, he asked them to bring in his last picture, that he might touch the canvas with one more gleam of beauty and grace before he passed within the shadows toward the light. This I can do, and you, as we listen to the bell whose vibra-

tion still sounds for us from the New Year's morning. Can say, I will take heed to my ways for the years that remain, strive to nourish my heart on a deeper faith, a fairer hope, and a purer love, and make good in the years that remain the poet's psalm and prayer: —

"O living will that shalt endure
When all that seems shall suffer shock,
Rise in the spiritual rock,
Flow through our deeds, and make them pure,
That we may lift from out the dust
A voice as unto him that hears
A cry above the conquered years
To one that with us works, and trust,
With faith that comes of self-control,
The truths that never can be proved
Until we close with all we loved,
And all we flow from, soul in soul."

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BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

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The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

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SERIES ON

BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

III. The Old Testament and Immortality

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THE OLD TESTAMENT AND IMMORTALITY.

As you will know, if you think of it a moment, where all phases of belief have been held during the developing life of a people, it is practically impossible to find any one passage of Scripture that shall adequately represent them all. Indeed, it is impossible; and I had in mind not taking any text at all, for I had rather have no text than have one that is not appropriate and does not meet the theme. But the words which I shall read to you now indicate with sufficient accuracy, perhaps, the hopeless, pessimistic outlook on death and the view which characterized the belief of the larger number, at least, of the early Hebrew people,— most of that life which we find a record of in the Old Testament. These words are in the ninth chapter of Ecclesiastes, the fifth verse,— "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten."

Possibly some of you may have noticed a discussion that has been going on for the last week or two in the columns of the New York *Sun*,— a discussion of this problem of immortality, and specially as related to the teaching of the Old Testament concerning it. An editorial in this morning's issue says that the popular interest in the subject has been indicated by the fact that on no other topic have they ever been so flooded with letters.

Some of these letters, as you would naturally expect, are

wise. A good many of them are not very wise. Many of them are written under bias, under the predominant influence of a tradition. Many of them show no critical knowledge whatever of the Scriptures. They show little acquaintance with the historic growth of belief on the part of the Hebrew people. But they do, at any rate, show an intense interest in this which, I venture to believe, is the most absorbingly and vitally interesting subject that has ever confronted the human mind.

I propose this morning to outline for you as clearly and simply as I can the growth and changes of belief among the Hebrew people. You will understand that this belief changes, that there are all phases of it from the beginning to the end, and that it is impossible to sum it up in any one general phrase. I shall ask you then to bear with me while I outline, in simple, plain fashion, the growth and changes of this faith. A topic like this does not admit of enthusiastic treatment. I cannot, while dealing legitimately and fairly, play upon your passions and your feelings, rouse you to high pitches of excitement. I must rather keep along the commonplace level of simple narrative and description. But this characteristic of my morning's theme will not hold true of a good many others that are to follow:

There is one very striking thing at the outset. Tradition tells us that Moses, having been discovered hidden away in the bulrushes on the banks of the Nile, was adopted by the daughter of Pharaoh, and treated and trained as her son. And we are told that he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. If this tradition be reliable, of course he must have had an intimate and comprehensive acquaintance with the ordinary Egyptian beliefs about this world, about the gods, about the other life. And yet Moses is the founder, not only of the religion, but of the Jewish state. He is the one who, as tradition tells us, gave shape at the outset to the young Hebrew civilization.

Now, if there is any one thing that is apparent on the face

of Egyptian belief, it is that they held the strongest kind of imaginative belief in another life. It is said that the young Egyptian, almost before he made preparations for keeping house in this world, began to make preparations for his tomb, looking forward to his relations to that life which was to follow this. Perhaps there is no other nation in antiquity where this belief in another life was more clearly and universally accepted and developed. And yet here we face the striking fact that I referred to a moment ago. When Moses comes to give shape to the Hebrew state and religion, he takes absolutely no account whatever of any belief in any other life than this. There is nowhere in that part of the Bible which is specially associated with Moses any clear teaching of any future life at all. There is nowhere any doctrine as to rewards in another life for good deeds in this or of punishment in any other life for bad deeds in this. The other life, in other words, plays no part in the Mosaic tradition.

How shall we account for this? There have been a great many explanations offered. Some have suggested that Moses came to think that the Egyptians laid too much emphasis on the other life, to the neglect of this one, and that, therefore, he left it practically out of account in his legislation. Others have said that, by a natural feeling of revulsion, the escaped slaves would be sure to hate whatever was associated with their former oppressors and masters. And yet there are certain very striking characteristics of the Hebrew religion which have their counterparts and parallels in the Egyptian. I am not ready to say that Moses borrowed them from the Egyptians, but it looks on the surface very much like it. The one central feature, almost, of the Jewish religion is the ark. The ark was one of the principal features of the Egyptian religion. Among the early Hebrews Yahweh, the national god, was worshipped in the figure of a bull. This was one of the commonest of the Egyptian idols; and the significance attached to it

by the two peoples was substantially the same. So it does not seem to me that we can find right here the explanation for the strange fact that Moses should have left the other life so entirely out of account. Perhaps it is not worth our while to spend much time in trying to explain it. The fact is there, and it is worthy of our notice; and perhaps that is enough for our purpose this morning.

Now I wish in a general way to emphasize what I have said in regard to the so-called Mosaic legislation and state a few common facts concerning the whole Old Testament. The word "heaven" and the word "hell" appear very frequently, indeed, in the Old Testament; and, when I was reading these chapters, as a boy, I naïvely took it for granted that the writers were talking about the same kind of heaven and hell that I had been trained to believe in. But I wish you to note with a great deal of care that there is not one single place throughout the whole Old Testament where the word "heaven" means what we are accustomed to associate with that name as popularly used to-day. There is not one place in the whole Old Testament where the word "hell" means what we mean by it to-day. So there is no doctrine of heaven and hell, in the modern theological sense, in the whole Old Testament.

There is not a case where anybody ever goes to hell in the Old Testament as the result of his bad deeds. There are only two cases in the whole Old Testament where anybody ever goes to heaven; and those two find their basis chiefly in tradition rather than anything else. Those two cases you will readily remember: they are Enoch and Elijah. It is said of Enoch, "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him." That is all the narrative says about him. But the belief grew up in after times that what that really meant was that God had taken Enoch right to heaven without his passing through the process of dying.

The other case is the familiar story of Elijah. In his old age he is walking with his companion prophet Elisha;

and suddenly there appear horses of fire and chariots of fire, and, before the astonished eyes of his compatriot, Elijah is seized away from his presence and caught up by a whirlwind into heaven. This is the record of the other supposed translation.

You will note that neither is specially clear on the subject; but they are distinguished as being the only two cases in the Old Testament where anybody is supposed to have gone to heaven.

Now, in order that I may make perfectly clear the teaching of the Old Testament concerning death and another life, I want to ask your attention while I quote and comment on a few of the principal passages in the Old Testament that are supposed to have some bearing on some phase of this problem. And, in the first place, take the passage that tells us about the creation of Adam,— "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

A great many persons are accustomed to suppose that this teaches by implication the fact of the immortal life, because, if man became the possessor of a living soul, that, they think, would go on. But the moment we look beneath the surface, and see that the word translated "soul" is precisely the same word which in other parts of the Old Testament is used to denote the life principle of animals, we see that it either proves too little or too much. Undoubtedly, the writer of that passage did not have this thought in his mind one way or the other.

I have said that there was no clear doctrine of another life in the Old Testament; and yet we find cropping up in the lives of the common people a belief which at least takes us a little way across the border, and suggests that thoughts in this direction were beginning to come into the popular mind. Take the command in Exodus,— "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." In Deuteronomy there is legislation concerning divination and witchcraft. Then there is that

famous story — the best example of all — of the witch of Endor, and how, to please Saul, she calls up the spirit of the old prophet Samuel.

But, if we study the characteristics of the real belief of the people at that time, we shall find,— what I shall emphasize in a moment,— that this spirit of Samuel was supposed to have been in a sort of comatose, unconscious condition, either connected with the place where he was buried or in that crude and indefinite underworld which was the first stage in the growth of sheol. He is disturbed and roused by the witch's magic out of this sleep, this condition of unconsciousness, utters his message and goes back into that condition again.

Undoubtedly, here is the beginning of the belief in an underworld; but it is anything but clear, and it was frowned upon by the authorities, the representatives of the priesthood. It was made a crime to have thus any communion with the dead.

It is worth our taking careful note of, right here, that among the Hebrew people, as you will find at all stages of their career, there was a belief in the possibility of communication between the two worlds. We find that a similar thing has been true in every nation, in every religion that we are able to investigate.

I am taking these passages, not certainly in chronological order, but in the order of the books as they stand in our Bible now. I wish you to note the picture of this other life as it appears in Job, if you can call it life. He says, "Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death: a land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness."

This is his picture,— the picture of the condition of the shades as it had developed itself up to the time of Job. The soul did not go quite into extinction; but it went down into this shadowy, underground world, where there was no real

life, no consciousness, where it was close on the borders of annihilation.

But there is another passage in Job which has been made a great deal of, which seems to take a long step forward. You remember it,— "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." It is unfortunate that this word "Redeemer" should be here in this passage; and it is not here in the Revised Version. Every scholar knows that it has no sort of connection with the thought of a Redeemer, as we are accustomed to use that word. Job has been accused, and he feels unjustly accused; and he simply stoutly asserts his belief that his vindicator liveth, and that this vindicator will some time appear for his deliverance and justify his contention that he is innocent. So you see this has no real bearing on this subject at all.

Here is a little passage from the Psalms that does seem to have a very strong implication in that connection. Unfortunately, we are not able, with any definiteness, to assign the time when these particular passages were written. If we could, we might get a very much clearer idea of the order of growth of belief among the Hebrew people. The writer of this Psalm — we have no idea who he was — says, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [sheol], neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption." Here is the beginning of that dawn of hope of deliverance from this underworld, to which I shall call your attention in a moment.

The ordinary tone of the Psalms concerning death is not at all hopeful. Take this one. He is asking God to keep him alive, and let him offer him acceptable worship while he is here. He says: "What profit is there in my blood when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? Shall it declare thy truth? Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the courts or thy faithfulness

in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark, or thy truth in the land of forgetfulness?"

And then the writer of Ecclesiastes: "For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool forever,—seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? As the fool." "For the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more reward, for the memory of them is forgotten."

And then that famous passage towards the end of the book: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no word, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest."

In another place is a touch of the Oriental doctrine of reabsorption into Deity. It is not to be personal immortality at all. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." The person is made up of two elements, the finer spiritual side and the earthly; and they go back, and are reabsorbed into whence they came.

Now here is one very striking picture of the condition of belief in this underworld to be found in Isaiah. The prophet is addressing the King of Babylon, and foretelling what is coming to him. He says: "Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. And they shall speak, and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols; the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee." This in Isaiah is a picture of what was expected in the future.

There is a very famous passage in Daniel. Daniel, you must remember, however, was written within two hundred years of the time of Christ; and beyond question it

represents the dawning of a great and hopeful belief, to which I shall call your attention in a moment. "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

These extracts give you a fair and fairly adequate conception of the Old Testament teaching concerning belief in another life, if you can call it life. Now I wish to go back, and indicate to you in broad outline some of the steps of the growth of this belief.

The Hebrew people in their religious thought and practices ranged all the way from the lowest barbarism up to the highest period of their civilization in the time of Jesus. At the outset they were nature-worshippers. They were sex-worshippers, with rites which to-day would seem to us obscene. They were sacrificers of human beings, even their own children; and, at the time when we find them in this condition, there is no belief in any desirable future life at all. At first there begins, just as we find it among all barbaric peoples, the notion that a shade may haunt the place of burial; and this grave at last develops into the thought of an underground abode, and this expands and grows larger as the thought of the people changes and expands.

At first, then, we must remember, that the Hebrew universe was a very small affair. Think, for example,— heaven, as their early writers pictured it, this blue dome above us, the "firmament," as it was called, was like a brass dome or cover, beaten out and shut down around the edge of the earth,— I do not know how to explain it better than to say like the cover of a dinner platter. It was regarded as solid. There were little windows in it to let through the rain. Up above this were stored the waters above the firmament, in contrast with the seas and lakes and rivers, the waters beneath the firmament. There was no underground world there. But above this firmament was heaven,

where God and his angels abode; but no people went there, no human beings dreamed of such a thing as looking forward to that kind of destiny.

Throughout the Old Testament, if you will note it carefully as you read, there is no ethical significance attached to the life after death. There is no future punishment for sin at first, and hardly anywhere in the Old Testament. It is the inevitable fate of men; but the good and the bad all alike go down into this underworld, one destiny awaits them all, and one hopelessness hangs with its gloom over them all. The only punishment that is ever threatened in the most of the Old Testament for flagrant wrong-doing is that men shall die. The one great reward held out for goodness is health, long life, many children, wealth, consideration among your people, friends and fame,— all rewards attaching to this life.

But of necessity an ethical sense must spring up among the Jews, because it springs up among all peoples after they reach a certain stage of development. The Book of Job concerns itself with the problem that sprang out of this old and popular idea. It was found that good people did not necessarily have better health than bad people. It was found that good people did not live seventy or eighty years, any more than bad people. It was found that good people were not always rich, not always prosperous, that they were not always blessed with children, that they were not always famous among their people; and it was found that bad people as frequently carried off the rewards of this life as did the virtuous. Thus they found that this theory would not work. Then there sprang up in their belief, as there has all over the world out of a similar experience, the belief in some future life of rewards and punishments, where the inner qualities of the present should be readjusted. This seemed to them a fundamental demand of justice. If God were righteous, there must be a reward for goodness. If God were righteous, there must be punishment some

time and somewhere for wrong; and, if it did not appear in this world, then it must appear in some other world.

So, out of reasoning like this, and the natural development of this first thin shade and the hollow connected with the grave, there grew at last the great underworld, which they called "sheol," mistranslated hell: or, rather, let me say, it is translated well enough; for hell comes from the same root as "hole," and originally meant only an underground cavern. In progress of time and change of thought it was narrowed at last and limited to a place of punishment, but that was not its original meaning. So in the Prayer Book, where it says that Christ descended into hell, it does not necessarily mean that he went to a place of torment.

There grew up, then, in the course of Jewish progress of thought a belief in the underworld; but the life down there was no more desirable than we find it to have been among the Greeks and the Romans. It was giving up the bright sunlight and the beauty and glory of this world under the sun and stars, and going down into a world of shadows. It was a fate from which to escape, if possible; and so, naturally, there grew in the minds of the people a belief that the good, at any rate, who were imprisoned in sheol, should escape.

This led to the doctrine of the resurrection. I shall have occasion to point out next Sunday a very important distinction. The doctrine of the resurrection does not necessarily mean the resurrection of the body: it means a re-surrection,— that is, a coming up again after having gone down somewhere. That is what the word means. So the Jews came to believe that those who were imprisoned in sheol could come up again, be resurrected. Whether they were joined to their old bodies or not was entirely another question, to be settled by other considerations.

So the doctrine came to be taught,— that was that these people imprisoned in the underworld should by and by be

set free, and come up into the light again; and when was this to be? You see we are a good ways off from any heaven yet. This was to be at the time of the coming of the Messiah. The Messiah was to appear, represent God's justice towards his own people and his judgment on their enemies, and he was to sit enthroned on Mount Moriah and the trumpet was to be blown and the dead were to come up from sheol, from this underworld, those that had been good, the faithful in the past, who had believed him and served God according to the light they possessed, and looked forward with hope to deliverance in the future,— these were to rise first; and they were to reign with the Messiah on the earth for a thousand years.

This was the magnificent belief that at last sprang up from the instincts and longings of the Hebrew heart. Some of the people believed that they were to be joined to their bodies, and some did not; some believed that the good and bad both were to be raised out of sheol; some believed that only the good were to be raised. You see there were all varieties of speculation, just as there are to-day, and just as there will be so long as human nature is what we know it to be now. Some believed that the bad, when they were raised, were to be cast into severe and age-long punishment. Others believed that they were to be destroyed,— in what is called to-day "Conditional Immortality."

Now what kind of a world was this underworld? I have said nobody went to heaven; and yet the belief grew up that the good were rewarded in this underworld and the bad were punished. What accommodation, then, was made for the inhabitants of sheol? There was a dividing line,— that line which the Hebrew writers tell us was not thicker than a thread; but it separated as by a great gulf Gehenna and Paradise. All the dead went down into sheol, or hades: the good went to Paradise, and the bad went to Gehenna. But they were so near together that they could see from one place across to the other, and even converse with each other, as appears in some of the parables of Jesus.

You will notice that I have gone a good ways beyond the letter of the Old Testament. I could not devote a sermon to that topic by itself. So I have included in my discussion this morning the growth of this belief in the other life up to the time of Jesus, across that great gulf of two or three hundred years represented by the blank leaves between the Testaments. Though most people do not take the trouble to familiarize themselves with what was going on during that time, those who have studied it know that it was one of the most intensely active and creative epochs in the history of the Jewish people.

There grew up the belief that God had intended that men should be immortal here on earth, that nobody should ever die; that it was only sin that led to death; that, if they had been obedient, they would have lived here until they were translated, without any death. A large part of the belief which I have outlined, you note, covers this period of the blank between the Testaments; but this development of the doctrine of the underworld, of Paradise and Gehenna, both in sheol, or hades, did not appear in the letter of the Old Testament at all, but was one of the later growths of the Hebrew faith.

At the time when Jesus was born we find three phases of belief which are worthy of our attention.

First there were the Sadducees. I think the popular idea is that the Sadducees were a sort of modern sceptic of their time. So far from that being truth, the Sadducees were the old, staid, respectable, moss-back conservatives: they were the ones who claimed to stand by the letter of the Mosaic law; and, therefore, they believed neither in angel nor spirit, had no belief in any future life at all. They were the old conservatives. They represented the old-time Mosaic tradition.

Then there were the Essenes. They were a sort of philosophical Platnists. They believed in a future life, but not in the resurrection of the body. They believed that the

spirit was imprisoned here for a time in the body; but, by and by, through death it escaped, and entered into the place prepared for it.

But the great popular party among the Jews — those that represented their grandest traditions, patriotic and religious as well — were the Pharisees. And the Pharisees held that the traditions of the elders were of equal authority with the old-time Mosaic teaching; and they had borrowed from the Babylonians or Persians the whole angelic hierarchy and of evil spirits as well, so that popularly they held not only a belief in immortality, but in innumerable evil spirits and innumerable good spirits. A man was surrounded by thousands of them, one class attempting to lead him to good and the other influencing him towards evil, so that he lived and walked every day in the midst of innumerable invisible inhabitants of the other world. This was the general Pharisaic belief at that time. So common did they believe these spirits were that it is said that a man, if he threw a stone over his shoulder, or threw away from himself a broken piece of pottery, asked pardon of any spirit that he might possibly have hit in so doing. This was the kind of world that was believed in by the Pharisees at the time that Jesus was born.

We see, then, as the summed up result of this brief outline that, although there was no teaching apparent and emphasized on the surface of the Old Testament, there really was a common belief underneath the surface, growing up in the hearts and imaginations of the common people; and we see also what we commonly misunderstand, that these other worlds took the shape which they had to take. Sometimes, as we look back and are studying the conditions of thought in the past, we are moved, perhaps, with feelings of scorn or contempt, we wonder how anybody could have held such ideas. But the evolutionist who studies carefully the growth of human thought, who traces it step by step, knows that at every stage of human progress men have

been as rational as their brain development at the time permitted them to be. They have reasoned as well as we reason to-day, in accordance with the facts with which they were familiar or what they supposed to be facts.

So the intellectual picture of this other life, its location, its inhabitants, its activities, was the background or framework that the intellectual development of the time was capable of outlining.

The moral idea, the thought of rewards and punishments, was the best that the moral development of the time was capable of framing; and the spiritual ideas and spiritual hopes were foregleams and foreshadows of the higher and finer and nobler truths of which we are gaining glimpses to-day.

So the Hebrews, along with all the other great peoples of the past, were passing through their normal and necessary stage of evolution in regard to this matter, their thought leading on to that which doth not yet appear.

Father, we thank thee that this hope has been whispered by the Infinite Spirit to the listening child-heart of every age, and that it has grown with the growth and with the strength and with the life of human thought, and that to-day it lures and leads us with the hope of a magnificent future. Amen.

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Mr. Savage's weekly sermons are regularly printed in pamphlet form in "Messiah Pulpit." Subscription price, for the season, $1.50; single copy, 5 cents.

GEO. H. ELLIS, Publisher,

272 Congress St., Boston, Mass.
104 East 20th St., New York.

UNITARIAN CATECHISM

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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MESSIAH PULPIT

NEW YORK

(Being a continuation of *Unity Pulpit*, Boston)

VOL. III. JANUARY 27, 1899. No. 17.

The Patience of Hope

A STORY

BY

REV. ROBERT COLLYER

GEO. H. ELLIS
272 CONGRESS STREET, BOSTON
104 E. 20TH STREET, NEW YORK
1899

Entered at the Post-office, Boston, Mass., as second-class mail matter

NOTE.

Rev. Dr. Savage was kept from his pulpit on Sunday, January 22, by an attack of *la grippe*. It is hoped and expected that he will be able to preach next Sunday.

THE PATIENCE OF HOPE.—A STORY.

"It is good that a man should both hope and wait."— LAM. iii. 26.

IT was my fortune on a summer's morning to watch a man at work in his garden, who made these words true to me in a very simple, earthward fashion, and so sweetly that the incident has stayed in my heart as some rare stanza in a poem will, or a noble strain of music.

It was a sultry morning, after a night of fitful and fevered rest, when I had risen quite early, and gone out doors to find no breath of air stirring in the heavens or sign of dew on the grass or the flowers, while, as it seemed to me, the very birds in the copse near at hand had no heart to sing their cheerful matin song. I was very much of their mind, also. But, as I sat there in the silence, I saw a man come out from his small home, near where I sat, to begin his day's work. It was a pretty place, standing in a small garden; and there was a bright look on the man's face when he came forth which made me feel a touch of shame, I think, for the look he would see on mine if he should turn to where I was sitting. But he had something else and something better to do. His first care, I noticed, was to leave the door of his living-room wide open, and open the windows also toward the morning, and then to hold up his face and his hand toward the heavens, that he might find the promise there I could not find anywhere as I sat nursing my discontent; while I thought there was a hopeful look, as he turned away, in his poise and posture, as if he was saying with the old prophet, There is a sign in the heavens of abundance of rain.

But no doubt he had done this on many a morning to find that all signs may fail in such a drought as this was, and so he must be the human providence once more which would see to the things in his garden plot which could not wait for the downpour of the heavens. So he began presently to bend over the green things growing and the flowers, as I thought, in a sort of tender pity and love for them, and to clear away what was withered in the fervent fires of yesterday; and, when this was all done, he went away with his can to the rear of the house for water to tide them over another day, and still another, if he must, until the hope was made good for them which seemed to have kissed his face and hand.

He spent an hour or more in the garden; and then it was time to begin his real day's work, which lay in the factory not far away. He was the engineer, as I found afterward; and so he must be early on hand to clear out the grates, to open the flues, to start the fire in the furnace, to watch the steam gauge, and see that all was right with the central motive power, on which all things over there must rest and turn. So, when this was done, and it was time to begin work, the steam trumpet rang through the still morning, true to the moment; and the mill hands began to flock in to their day's work in the factory, from the small town. Now the man had said no word to me, and was not aware, I suppose, that I was watching him at his work in the small garden, but just went his way from the pleasant to the painful task, for such a day as that was; while I said in my heart, I would like to tell you, my cheerful fellow, how in this hour you have sung me a psalm and preached me a sermon I hope I shall not forget in what you have done, coming out as you came, with that bright look on your face to greet the new day I greeted with this cloud of discontent on mine, throwing those windows and the door wide open to the morning born from above, holding up your face and your hand for the promise of the rain and the season of refresh-

ing from on high, but watering the plants and the flowers all the same, lest once more the promise should fail through your failure to do a man's part, and then turning away, when that was done, to make good your covenant of a day's work for a day's wages yonder in the factory, and so making good the great apostle's word within the power of your humble striving,— "If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

Nor, as he went his way, could I guess whether he had said some brief prayer before he came out to preach me that sermon and sing me the song without words; but I said again in my heart, These things you have done are a prayer at the heart of all doing, — a prayer which would not affront those that rise from the heart of devout men and women all round the world this morning, while it was far more to the purpose, I think, than mine was, which ended in my sitting here in this ugly and dismal mood.

Then I said in my musing, If you are the man I take you to be this morning, maybe, one with a great many that have come and gone, when you would be there betimes as you were, with the bright face and the hand lifted toward the heavens, feeling forth toward the promise, while those flowers that bloomed in your heart's love for them before they could begin to bloom in your garden would only be cared for all the more when day by day you waited, and the hope deferred would not make *your* heart sick, because you would say to yourself, and it may be to them, It will be all right with you and me to-morrow; while a morrow would be sure to come when the ancient promise would come true,— "I will hear the heavens, saith the Lord, and the heavens shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn and wine and oil; and they shall hear the cry of my people."

Once more I could well believe that my monitor and singer of the morning psalm was tired out, when he went to his rest, with the hard day's work and the sultriness of many yesterdays in which the springs of life had run low for us

all, and might well have said that morning: What is the use of my doing more than my day's work in the factory, keeping up the fires and looking after the engine,— for that must be done? So I will let the plants wither and the flowers fade, and heaven and earth may answer for the blasting of my hope. But there he was at sunrise, seeing what could be done to make the best of what seemed so bad, and to slay such a paltry purpose, if, indeed, it had got a grip on his cheerful and hopeful heart. He would do this, and then he would find the good cheer answer to his good striving for the rescue of the things he loved from disaster and death. He would give them a new lease of life by working the pump I heard creaking in the rear of his small home, bearing back and forth the can, and so make good for his garden plot another word in the Holy Book touching the life that now is and that which is to come,— "Be faithful, and strengthen the things which remain that are ready to die."

And then, as I still mused over the sight, I said it might well fall to this man's lot to remember how he had failed in some dry time like this to lift his hand and face heavenward, feeling forth toward the promise, and so, quite out of heart shall I say, in all reverence, had failed to help God dress and keep the garden; had said in his heart, It is no use trying any more: the plants must wither and the flowers must fade. But the blessed rains had come all the same. Only this was his trouble,— that, because he had lost heart and hope that day, they had come too late, and then he would see where the fault lay, and the failure. They lay in the failure of his own faith and hope in the great Mother Nature and in God. But then I said, This may have given birth, after all, to the eager and hopeful glance I saw on his face just now. And from that time forth he would work the pump and bear the can for all they were worth, as we say, and win by the faithful striving that which would not refresh the plants and the flowers alone, but refresh the man himself, and another man, it may be, he will never hear of;

while from that time he would never let the heart in him brood too much or too long over the dry and dusty times, but would summon faith and hope on each new morning like this to help heaven from the springs within that would never again run dry.

And now may I tell you how good it was, and pleasant, to notice how the noble Scripture was verified,— "Be not weary in well-doing; for ye shall reap your reward, if ye faint not,"— when, on the very day after our silent meeting, the rain came down in a beautiful abundance to bless the garden plot, and the cool breezes came to fan him all day long at his work among the enginery, to stay my own discontent also, and make good for me the words of my text, It is good that a man should both hope and wait, should nourish this spirit and temper through which the soul in us feels her wings, the hope which puts us in a working mood, and holds the terms of her own fulfilment,—

> "Waits through the darkness for the coming dawn,
> Frustrated day by day, but still to victory borne,"—

the winged spirit which stands ready to sing to us as she sang to my rich poor man that morning, if we will only lift up the hand and turn the face toward the promise which lies forever in the new mornings of God,— the divine alchemy, as the good seer says, which can help us turn the bare and common stones of our life into rich and rare jewels.

And so it was that, as my parable of a summer's morning still dwelt with me, I said, There can be no hope well worth the name which fails to start in us all the springs of a good striving, first, last, and always, which will make a close and true connection with the fruition for which we so often have to watch and wait; and we are only wise, as my humble teacher was wise, when we catch the moments on the wing, and turn them to the true and good account in the conduct of our life. We also must open the doors and windows of

the soul for whatever freshness of the morning may be waiting in the dry and dusty spaces of our human life, and see to the plants and the flowers in the gardens we are set to dress and keep, which may shed their fragrance then, and touch with their beauty, not our own heart alone, but the heart of the world about us. And we must open the doors, clean out the grates, and start the fires afresh that have burnt low, and then go right on with the day's darg, as they say in Scotland, whatever that may be, see to the motive power at the centre, and then we shall also sing our song without words; for these fine conclusions between hope and fruition can no more come by our mere waiting, even on God, than the great harvests have come this year on the land, or the great pictures that win the world's heart to the galleries.

It is to be made good by no happy chance, or by waiting for something to be done for us. We must do for ourselves, and still for ourselves, as if my man had said to his flowers that morning, There is a sign of rain up yonder, and so you can wait now until it comes down. The hope in the man was also his inspiration, as it must be for us all in the dry and dusty times; while the hope which fails to inspire us then may be only an illusion like that I saw once as we crossed the plains,— a reach of rippling water, as we might well imagine, but, when we drew near, it was only sage-brush and sand. But in the great and pregnant things of our life, if we can nourish the heart which was in my man for the common things he loved so, and would bless, then the hope which will tide us over the drought will come on strong wings; and we are saved by the hope which is not seen, while more will come of our striving than can ever lie in our hope, if all these years have been of any worth to teach me. For well the peerless woman of our century says: "There are seeds sown silently, unseen of men; and everywhere flowers will spring without our foresight or our labor. And so, while we reap what we have sown, Nature's

bounty and the great Providence will still overleap all we do, and give us blossoms and fruit which spring from no planting of ours." We must mind the saying, then, of the grand old martyr I love so to cite,— God is our helper, but he loves to be helped. And so, as we say in our folk speech, we must be on hand, as my man was on hand, and get a good ready; must beware how we say, It is no use trying, when the droughts of life are at their worst. We must trust in the great Helper to cube all our striving, and listen to the Psalmist's cheerful song,—"Wait on the Lord, be of a good courage, and he shall give thee thy heart's desire."

In the upland pastures and on the moors which lie about my old home two birds make their nest in the spring, drawn thereto by their love. And then the time comes when the one bird soars and sings over the nest lying far below until he is lost in the blue arches of the heavens, while still the song rains down upon you, faint, but clear. But the mother bird lies silent in her nest, brooding over the promise of all the birds that will ever sing of her brood, hiding these things in her heart, like Mary, the Madonna. The song is sung by hope, the brood is nurtured by faith; and so forever, when the spring comes, and the summer, the uplands and the moors are full of melody, and the larks that were singing when Caractacus came through the Dale on his way to Rome, and when Severus, the great emperor, sat on Severs hill on his way to old York, were singing in my boyhood. And last summer they were singing of their hope, and brooding in the nest below by faith.

And now shall I touch my story of this rich poor man once more for the lessons I fain would learn, and teach of the way faith, hope, and love were blended in his heart that morning,— faith in the sowing, hope in the fruition, and love for the things he tended,— or he would have made no garden, and perhaps been content with a shanty and a pigsty? So faith, hope, and love will all clasp hands to bear

us over the dry and dusty times, I say, in our life; and, while faith inspects, hope will expect, faith will look inward and hope will look upward, and the light in the eyes of faith will grow strong, while the light in the eyes of hope will grow clear, soaring above the mists that lie on our earthward lot. Faith will be quiet in possession, while hope will grow eager in expectation, singing her matin and her vesper songs; and then faith will be the evidence of things not seen, while hope will be the evidence of things foreseen, and both together will be nurtured and made strong on the mother milk of love.

Yes; and, when your faith or mine must still lie low, just able to brood and flutter,— shall I say? — and no more, and the wings of our hope are heavy, and cannot make good the good poet's line,—

> "The music soars within the little lark,
> And so the lark soars,"—

let us then lift the face and the hand toward the blessed heavens, and say with good Dame Winthrop in the story, "If we do our part, Master Marner, it is not to be believed as them that are above will come short of theirn; and so we must trusten, Master Marner, we must trusten."

In the years that are no more and yet are forevermore, I remember how a small boy who was sorely afflicted would hirple to the table in the morning with a brightness in his face and eyes no pain could slay; and, when his father said, "What will you have this morning, my son?" he would answer cheerily, "I will have what there is, papa." So, when I said to his mother once, "Do you ever remember his complaining over what there *was?*" she said she could remember no such morning in all the years. And so we must take our life as it lies with God, in the clasp, for us all, of his eternal love, and say, I will have what there is, Abba Father; and, if the bitter follows the sweet, and the long droughts the sweet spring rains, while pain usurps the

throne of pleasantness, mind the good bishop's saying,— that "wormwood eaten with bread is not bitter"; for so shall it be then with the bread of life which cometh down from heaven.

We must open our hearts— the doors and the windows — to the new mornings, which will never cease to come until there is no more night; see to the things which remain from all the yesterdays, and be sure they are not all dead. They are never all dead, and so it is good for a man that he shall both hope and wait.

Do I speak to some, then, who are in the heart of the drought, and to whose heart the plants, the flowers of the former years, seem to be blighted past all hope of refreshing, and the investments we made in life, and life's worth in the brave May-days, turning to dust, as we fear? I must, you must, we must be faithful and hopeful as he was, my rich poor man; and then I know what will befall you who are still in the springtime of your life. The time will come when you will regret, as I do now, that you ever lost a morning brooding over the dryness and the dust.

And what shall we do who are in the afternoon or the eventide of life? We must hold on to our faith and our hope in the life that now is and in that which is to come, nurtured and made strong by the mother milk of love for whatsoever things are true and lovely and of a good report, lift hand and face still to the promise of the new morning; and then these last years will be to the first what the harvest has been to the sowing and the planting. Be anxious for nothing save this: that our faith shall grow forever stronger in the brooding, and our hope soar higher and send down stronger notes, so that the last years may clasp hands with those we remember with a most tender love. But I notice that Bunyan, after taking his pilgrims over the hill of difficulty, says, "Then I saw in my dream that they came to a country where the air tended to make one drowsy"; and I wonder whether this is not what he means,— that the time

may come when we begin to let painstaking slip out of our striving, and to draw on the days when we did strive nobly for the shortage.

The time when we do not care to nourish a great hope any more, but are content to exchange the soaring heart for the plodding, and where once we stood bravely and strove for noble reforms in our life and our faith, we begin to drowse, and to think the old reforms that kindled in us the white fire, as citizens of the commonwealth, went far enough; while for the higher and diviner truth, which touches most truly the soul's life, we grow content not to go quite so far as some we can name.

It is then that your noble artist hardens down into a mere imitator, and creates no more; your noble writer gives us the skim milk where once he gave us the cream of his genius; and your minister, whose word was once tipped with fire from heaven, preaches the cold ashes of his dead sermons. But in life in the commonwealth and in the church of the living God the brave and true men Heaven delights to honor, and the women to match them, hold on well to the noble passion, and never see the day when they are not ready to maintain the truth for which they have stood in passing over the hill of difficulty by faith and hope in God. And in the churches of our faith and love — whatever may be the name — the time comes of drought and dryness, when it seems as if the fruit of our planting and our tender and faithful care is blending with that cry of the prophet: "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, because the breath of the Lord bloweth upon it; and surely the people is grass."

Then, if I may touch once more my simple story, it is not as if my teacher on that morning had said: I am tired of all this labor and care for my garden: the grass may wither, the flowers may fade. What is the use? I will let the thing go to the withering, and see only to my engine; for

this is what I must do for the sake of the weans and wife. It is not so, it is never so, with the faithful and true, the elect, shall I not say, of the Most High. They still lift the hand and the face toward the heavens to welcome the new morning, and say, It is good for us that we should both hope and wait. They work with God in his garden, and find the wells that never run dry deep down in their faith and hope and love; and love crowns all.

And now but one word waits to be said, as the conclusion of the whole matter. There, enthroned in the heavens, sits one whose life is the light of men, because beyond all men there came into his heart, as he stood at the carpenter's bench, the faith that he had a divine work to do in this world for God and for his human family. And so he went forth on his divine errand, with faith and hope and love burning in his heart. He was despised and rejected of men, but they bore him through that. There was one day we know of, when he cried, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" but they bore him through that day. The divine destiny he had believed in never seemed such an utter failure as when he was dying on the cross; but they bore him through that day. He died, that he might live to a diviner purpose, in the very rose bloom of his human life; but they were there with him on the tree. And so, men and women working for God, working with God, for his truth and life, it is almost natural, when you see what appalling forces of evil you have to encounter, and how slowly the truth seems to win its way, that you should be ready sometimes to say, What is the use lifting the face and the hand toward the heavens, and waiting for the downpour of His blessed rains on the plants of His grace? We will mind the day's work we must mind, and let the rest go. But no, *no*, I say, I must have faith in my faith, then, and the hope that is not seen, and the love which beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, and never faileth; for so shall we help and strive

toward the new heavens and the new earth,— the kingdom of God.

"Thou must be true thyself
If thou the truth would teach.
Thy soul must overflow if thou
Another soul wouldst reach.
It needs the overflowing heart
To give thy lips full speech.
Think truly, and thy thought
Shall the world's famine feed;
Speak truly, and thy thought
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed."

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(Being a continuation of *Unity Pulpit*, Boston)

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PEACE ON EARTH

BY

REV. EDWARD EVERETT HALE, D.D.

GEO. H. ELLIS
272 CONGRESS STREET, BOSTON
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1899

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NOTE.

Rev. Dr. Savage being still unable to occupy his pulpit, Rev. E. E. Hale, D.D.. preached on Sunday, January 29. Dr. Savage will resume his pulpit work as soon as possible, and will then continue the series on "Immortality."

PEACE ON EARTH.

"On earth peace, good will toward men." — LUKE ii. 14.

THE song of the angels is taken fairly to express the hope and aim of the Church of Christ. He has no title more tender and true than that of "the Prince of Peace," though he himself said so sadly, "Think not that I have come to bring peace, but a sword," though his triumph was to be won when the blood flowed from his side, drawn by the spear of a Roman soldier.

In our great festivals, as on Christmas morning or on Easter Day, if we dare, we are glad to sing Milton's hymn:

> "Nor war or battle sound
> Was heard the world around.
> No hostile chiefs to mutual conflict ran."

And our prayer to God is always that the sword may be sheathed, and men need study war no more.

But, in face of this hope,— yes, and prophecy,— we have to own that even in Christendom the general belief and practice is the other way. Men will laugh in your face when you say, "The lion shall lie down with the lamb." They will repeat the old jest that the lamb will be inside the lion. They will sneer at talk of universal peace, as being only the dream of poets and of prophets. "The men who swing on rainbows," they say, "the sonneteers, the sweet singers,— they are the men who prattle about lambs and kids and doves, and swords beaten into ploughshares." And this sneer of the "men of practice," as they love to call themselves, goes

so far that in average talk you find the recurrence of war spoken of as a regular necessity. As in our Spartan times, the mothers of our Israel assembled their families in spring-time, and gave to each member a dose of nauseous medicine,— to the weak that they might be made strong, to the strong that they might not be sick,— you are coolly told that once in a generation there must be a drawing of blood. It is like Dr. Sangrado in the novel. What people called in old times the "bad humors" must be drawn off, and this means bloodshed. You hear this in the pulpit. You hear it in common talk. It works its way into senates and councils.

Within a month, in a large assembly in a university of years of honest fame, a professor said to me, confidently, "Why is it that every century is more warlike than any before?" And I had to answer, "Because it is not so." I had to remind him that the people of the United States had had scarcely eight years of war in this nineteenth century, against thirty-four or five in the century before. In the same two centuries, England's contrast, in general European wars, is fourteen years of war, with Napoleon and afterwards with Russia, against nearly fifty years in the century before. In face of figures so distinct as these, that easy phrase that men make war more than ever finds way in conversation and even affects public policy and education.

But, in truth, all the time the civilization of the world advances, commerce advances, education advances, the Christian religion advances. And commerce, education, civilization, and Christianity mean peace. Prophecy is more and more intelligible with every year; and prophets know — because prophets are poets if you please — that all their prophecies of the twentieth century will fail if it is not a century of peace.

Of a sudden the time comes, and the clock strikes. "The present moment would be a favorable time to find the means for insuring durable peace to all people."

"To all people." "Durable peace." "The present moment." Whose are these words? Is this some dreamy poet swinging on a rainbow? Is this some coward lover wanting to play with Neæra's hair? It is the leader of the largest army in the world. "Let us have peace," as the great soldier of America said. It is the sovereign of the largest territorial dominion in the world. It is the Czar of Russia. "The present moment," he says. What is the present moment? It is the moment when that nation which best represents modern life has crushed by a single blow the only state which was left to represent bigotry and tyranny and savagery. America has crushed Spain, and is arranging the terms of permanent peace between the new and the old. The miserable blunder of King James the Fool of England, after Elizabeth had crushed the Spanish Armada, has been atoned for, and that business has been finished. The new has asserted itself, and feudalism is at an end. To-day has spoken, and yesterday is nowhere.

This moment, then, is the moment to insure durable peace, — "the present moment."

The czar's proclamation is carelessly spoken of as simply a proposal for disarmament. It is criticised with sneers, abuse, ridicule, or indifference, mostly by people who have taken the precaution not to read it. In truth, however, it begins: "The preservation of universal peace and the reduction of armaments make the ideal to which all governments should direct their efforts." It ends with a prayer that these efforts may be united in one focus. That is the striking figure of the appeal which the czar makes for a formal consecration of the principles of right, on which rest the security of government and the progress of the peoples.

The czar takes pains to show that now for twenty years every important treaty has affected to seek this object,— "general pacification," or, in a more literal rendering, "the peace-loving tendencies." He now proposes a confer-

ence of all the powers of the civilized world, great and small, to occupy itself with this object so generally desired. I am not sure but I should best advance my purpose now if I took your time in reading the whole of his appeal. I will read the beginning and the end. It begins with these words, of which I have already cited some: —

"*The preservation of general peace* and the possible reduction of the excessive armaments now pressing upon all nations make the ideal towards which the endeavors of all governments should be directed.

"His Majesty the Emperor, my august master, has been won over to this view.

"Convinced that this lofty aim accords with the essential interests and legitimate views of all the powers, the Imperial Government believes the present moment to be the favorable time to seek by an international council the most practicable means of insuring real and durable peace to all peoples; and, above all, of limiting the ever-increasing development of the present armaments."

And it ends thus: "Filled with this idea, his Majesty has been pleased to order that I propose to all the governments who have accredited ministers at his court the meeting of a conference which should occupy itself with this great problem.

"This conference, by the help of God, would be a happy presage of the century now about to begin. It would converge in one focus all the efforts of all the states which sincerely desire that the great conception of universal peace should triumph over the elements of strife and discord. It would at the same time, by formal union, cement an agreement among the nations on those principles of equity and right on which rest the security of governments and the progress of peoples."

Observe, now, these are the words of a man or of men who have read the important treaties of twenty years. These men tell us that all these treaties embody some wish

or plan for permanent peace. In quite wide conversation with many people who ridicule them, I have not met one person who has taken the precaution to follow that example in reading these treaties.

I do meet every day persons who make the reply dictated by the somewhat hasty slang of our time, and are satisfied to say, "The czar lies."

I am not, myself, in the habit of ascribing the worst motives to any man, when he professes other motives. If, as the Prayer Book has it, a man profess and call himself a Christian, I call him so, too. And, if an emperor tells me that twenty years have taught him this or that, I believe it is so till some one can prove the contrary. But in this case we need not discuss his motives. Happily, the conference proposed by him has been agreed upon by all the great powers addressed. Lord Salisbury's magnificent letter is even stronger than the czar's in its statement of a great necessity and a noble hope. If the czar have bent from his throne, as I am asked to believe, to mumble out a coward's lie, it is but one instance more where Satan has served the servants of the Lord.

The czar's word once spoken cannot be unspoken. This conference has been called, and will be held. What Isaiah looked forward to will come to pass. What Henry IV. died for will come to pass. What William Penn begged for will come to pass. What Immanuel Kant demanded will come to pass. That is to say, sixteen men, representing sixteen nations, with authority given them to confer on what is possible, will enter one room, to make for the next century some plan for the maintenance of permanent peace. So many rays will be "united in one focus."

There is, as I intimated, a tragic interest, as one remembers that we were almost at this point three centuries ago. This great proposal of the czar's recalls, at once, the memory of what Henri Quatre and Sully and Elizabeth and Bur-

leigh called the "Great Design." Successful at every point, Henry, at the head of France, proposed the "Great Design." It was a design by which the fifteen states of Europe should unite in one permanent council for the mutual preservation of peace. I never heard any one say that Henry swung on rainbows or played with fancies. Men say he is the greatest monarch of three centuries, Frederic and Napoleon not excepted. I do not hear men call his minister Sully a dreamer or a lazy poet. Rather I hear him called the first statesman of five centuries. These men prepared the "Great Design." They submitted it to Elizabeth just after she had crushed the Armada. She and her ministers, such men as Burleigh and Walsingham, agreed to it, and improved it. They proposed it to the other states of Europe, with the eloquence of sovereigns who had armaments behind them. All but one of these states fell into the "Great Design." Yes, and Henry was no such dreamer, but he meant to compel by force the Emperor of Germany to fall into line with the rest. It was at that moment that tyranny and bigotry used their one weapon, and the dagger of Ravaillac pierced the heart which was throbbing with the hope of universal peace for Europe.

It is not amiss to go back three centuries to learn that a design like this is not unfamiliar to statesmen and to soldiers.

But in America we need no such examples. America is the great example. The United States of America is the great peace society of history. Thirteen little States unite. Because they unite, in one century's time they make the strongest empire in the world. What is the secret of their peace, of their prosperity? There are forty-six States, after a century, knit together as one, "made perfect in one," as the Saviour prayed,— *E pluribus unum*, as our fathers chose our motto. For one hundred and ten years — with one wretched exception, which is not an exception — these

States have been at peace. Think of it! Thirteen bankrupt, war-worn, jealous little provinces stretched, starving, along the sands of the Western Atlantic. Thirteen States, different in origin, in interests, in religion, in commerce, in habits of life, in education. Why do they not quarrel and fight, as the little states of Germany have done, as the provinces of France and Spain, as the duchies of Italy, always warring and wrangling? Why for one hundred and six years peace, absolute peace?

Why, there have been questions of boundary, since my own memory, such as have convulsed Europe and South America a hundred times in two centuries, such as are breeding war in the world to-day. Between Massachusetts and Rhode Island, between Iowa and Missouri, have been such questions. And yet men have already forgotten that they ever existed. Why do we not know of wars about them, as those which convulsed Italy till our own time? Because the wisdom of the Fathers, in the providence of God, under the gospel of Jesus Christ, created

A Permanent Tribunal,
A Supreme Court,

which should hear all such questions, and decide them without appeal to arms. A supreme court,— *supreme*, indeed! Higher than president. Higher than senates or assemblies. Higher than governors or councils or separate States. It speaks. Men hear, and they obey.

It is to the infinite credit of the lawyers of the world that they see the possibilities of a supreme court which shall be the arbiter thus in the quarrels of nations. I think we owe to Henri or to Sully the phrase the "United States of Europe." It is to the great lawyers of our own time that we owe practical plans, the possibilities for the *permanent tribunal*, the supreme court of Christendom.

Of twenty plans for a permanent tribunal which will be laid before this conference,— where at last such plans can

be considered,— that which now has the highest sanction is that wrought out by the Bar Association of this State. It was drawn up by a special committee of the distinguished lawyers of the city of New York after careful consultation. They intrusted the draft of their proposal to Mr. W. Martin Jones, of Rochester, and Mr. Walter S. Logan, of this city. It received the indorsement of the whole committee, most or all of whom are known by those to whom I speak. Let me repeat the names of Mr. Veeder, the chairman; of the two gentlemen whom I have named; of Messrs. Rogers of Buffalo, Gilbert of Malone, Deshon and Whittaker of this city; of Messrs. Robertson and Davison. When I say that Mr. Chauncey Depew and Professor Moore are advisory members of the committee, I have certainly named persons whom you do not think of generally as swinging upon rainbows, or as lying in hammocks writing sonnets to their mistresses' eyebrows. I think, if any one of us here had to argue in his own affair, he would be glad if he could enlist Mr. Depew, Mr. Logan, or any of these gentlemen in his business. This committee prepared a plan which received the approval — unanimous or almost unanimous — of the full meeting of the association. They addressed it to the President of the United States. Mr. Cleveland and Mr. Olney both expressed interest in the project and proposition.

The plan is so simple that it does not need a long statement, and I will not read it here. It proposes that, if nine nations can be induced to combine in the great combination, the highest court of each one of them shall be empowered to name one of its own members for life as a permanent member of the great national tribunal. If only two nations or three agree to the plan, it can begin.

These lawyers are practical men, who do not mean to compel a nation to appear before the tribunal any more than you compel a man, a private citizen, to come to law, if he does not want to. They do propose, as one of the wisest and wittiest said to me not long ago, to "hang up

their shingle," and write on it the words, "International Justice administered here."

A court to consist of two nations, or three, or of nine, would be looked upon with a certain doubt. The least important cases would be submitted to it first. Some question as to whether there shall be a seal left in the world, or a seal-skin sacque for our grand-daughters to wear in 1950, would be submitted to it. The diplomats of Russia, England, Canada, and the United States, under great pressure, have not succeeded in determining in thirty years whether this interesting race of animals,— our nearest kin, as Mr. Darwin has it,— shall exist a century longer. If there were this international court, the diplomats would be glad to turn over to it for an answer the questions which are involved. Or, for a good instance, the question whether a lobster be a fish or not,— a question which the newspapers told us six weeks ago was going to bring the nations of England and France into collision.

As the central tribunal decided such lesser questions, it would be gaining prestige and authority. It would have a right to call for witnesses, perhaps from all parts of the world, and for experts on questions of science; and it would decide then, and on such a decision the nations of the world would wait. I do not say they would always obey, but here would be time given for consideration; and the opinion of a board of honor, integrity, and impartiality, would be very difficult for any nation to evade.

Let me suppose that in the harbor of one nation the warship of another should be destroyed by some explosion. Let me suppose that such a permanent tribunal as the Bar Association proposes had been in existence, under favorable prestige, for ten or twenty years. Does any one doubt that to such a tribunal both nations thus involved would gladly have referred all the questions of the duties, effects, and responsibilities of the two nations concerned?

I speak with some care of the power of this Supreme Court

to compel the attendance of witnesses, because even in great international arbitrations there is, in practice, no such power. In the eighty-four years since the Treaty of Vienna, there have been more than eighty-four cases where questions in contention were decided by special boards of arbitration. So much have we gained, and we may thank God for the gift. Eighty-four wars prevented for the nations involved! So many years of peace where there might have been years of bloodshed. But — it is a pity to have to say it — each one of these courts of arbitration has been dissolved as soon as it has done its work. The great tribunal of Geneva, which decided the "Alabama claims," may be spoken of with the highest respect as perhaps the most distinguished tribunal which has existed in centuries. The character of the judges, their learning and ability, the well-earned distinction of the counsel, the importance of the questions at issue, all gave to the decisions of this court the greatest interest. The court made its decision, and the nations obeyed; and then this distinguished court dissolved, its powers melted into thin air, it was nowhere. It had no precedents to govern it, I might say it had no future before it; and it had no power to call a witness to testify as to the expense of a pin, though the witness lived in the building in which the court was sitting. It was obliged to act upon the statements put in by the respective governments. It could hardly inquire where they received their information. It could not test that information by cross-examination or by any additional testimony. Indeed, the tribunal may be compared to the simple arrangements of the frontier, where two quarrelling neighbors agree to "leave out their case to men," and where these men, poor fellows, cannot summon a witness, perhaps cannot order the production of a title, and can ask for no information but that which the prejudiced parties give them.

In place of this the Bar Association proposes a Permanent Tribunal, to be in session from the first moment of one

century to the last moment of the next, ready to hear any nation which wishes to bring its questions for decision, to hear the arguments of their counsel, to possess itself of all the facts, and then, without prejudice, to decide.

Such is the great opportunity which is given to the next century,— a presage, as the czar says so well, for the beginning of the century new born.

As Americans, we may well be proud that a commission of our most distinguished lawyers have connected themselves with the details which treat of such a possibility. It ought to be said that the great lawyers always understand and recognize such possibilities. I am tempted to read to you a part of the magnificent speech of Chauncey Depew when he gave his approval to the plan of the Bar Association as between England and America.

He speaks of the lawyers of Charles I.'s time, and of their leadership in that advance which England and the world made in the English rebellion and revolution. "We remember that, even in the days of almost universal assent to the divine authority of kings, Justice Coke could boldly challenge and check the autocratic Charles with the judgment that the law was superior to the will of the sovereign. Christian teachings and evolution of two thousand years, and the slow and laborious development of the principles of justice and judgment by proof, demand this crowning triumph of ages of sacrifice and struggle. The closing of the nineteenth, the most beneficent and progressive of centuries, would be made glorious by giving to the twentieth this rich lesson and guide for the growth of its humanities and the preservation and perpetuity of civilization and liberty."

As Americans, I say that we are proud that such an initiative should be given by the great lawyers of our own country. But, in truth, as I have said already, the American Union is itself an object-lesson, showing what a "supreme

tribunal" is. It is an example of authority to examine and to decide the questions which arise between so many States, stretching from ocean to ocean, among men of every pursuit and of different interests and all religions. Thus has the supreme tribunal of America shown to the world what is possible in maintaining the peace of "the United States of America." With this object-lesson, we are able to make a step forward, which shall lead to what Henry IV. called "the United States of Europe," and to what we will yet call, not the United States of Europe, but the "United States of Christendom."

And as Christian men and women, as we read every prophecy of the past, we have a right to look forward with the eye of those who believe that the good God made of one blood "all races of men." We see the prophecy of the past accomplishing itself more and more distinctly, as every year comes forward of what we now call the future. More and more confidently do we thank God that our children, if not we ourselves, shall live in the century

"Where the common sense of most shall hold a fretful world in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapped in Universal Law."

"Earth, wise from out the foolish past,
Shall peradventure hail at last
The advent of that morn divine,
When nations shall like forests grow,
Wherein the oak hates not the pine,
Nor birches wish the cedars woe;
But all in their unlikeness blend,
Confederate to one golden end."

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BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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WILD LILIES

BY

REV. ROBERT COLLYER

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NOTE.

Rev. Dr. Savage being still unable to occupy his pulpit, Rev. Robert Collyer preached on Sunday, February 5. Dr. Savage will resume his pulpit work as soon as possible, and will then continue the series on "Immortality."

WILD LILIES.

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow."— MATT. vi. 28.

THE commentators are a good deal troubled about the special flower Jesus had in his mind when he said these words; but this seems to be the general conclusion,— that, in any case, it was a wild flower of which he speaks, a lily growing as it pleases God, without man's help or intervention. It is evident, also, that there were then, as there are now, in those lands a great many varieties of these wild lilies, two of which are selected, I notice, for special comment. One is hedged about with thorns, so that you cannot easily reach it except at some risk from the spikes; while the other grows among the wheat and barley, is looked on by the farmer with great disfavor, and is plucked up by the roots, bound into bundles, and burnt. One of these, it is imagined, must have been the lily the great Teacher had in his mind, and this may be the truth; while it is still possible he did not mean this or that flower in particular, but the whole wealth of wild things of this sort with which they were all familiar.

Here they were growing all about him,— in the woods, the pastures, and among the corn,— things of no account, if a gleam of beauty is of no account, and a touch of fragrance,— wild, and in the way very often, as mere weeds to be mown down or plucked from among the growing wheat, and burnt. But within the worthlessness he found a worth. "These wild things also are from God," he says; "and, of no worth to you, they are of so much worth to him that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not so arrayed. You want them out of the way. He put them in the way, and has a loving glance

toward what you merely tolerate, or why should He have cast such a wealth of beauty and fragrance into the cup of their life?"

And I think we find the key to this truth of the lilies as we try to identify ourselves with the men and women to whom he was speaking. He was speaking to them about their life; and, let them make the best they could of this, it was a life in which they would be inclined to feel very often that they were of no great account. They were the sort of people in the main who had to take hold of very humble callings to earn their bread, and to work at such tasks with a scanty and poor encouragement. There were hard times also in those days as there are in these, worse indeed than any we can imagine, so that they must have been quite fortunate if they did not feel they were rather in the way and the world would be better off without them.

They were more fortunate also than some are now, if they did not feel that their poor and obscure lot was, on the whole, as good a lot as they had any right to expect, because of a certain wild and weedy quality in their nature, out of which they could never hope to rise into any great worth either to themselves or to the world about them, because there is only here and there a man, where the conditions of life are hardest and most hopeless, who will not be content to take his hard lot quietly but will keep up a steady revolt against it and look out for better days. To most men, and especially to those who are born to toil where the chances for rising are hardly worth counting, it is about as it has been with your Saxon serf in England for a thousand years,—

> "A long mechanic pacing to and fro,
> A gray set life and apathetic end."

So what can be more natural in such a case than the dull, dreary feeling that you are of no more account to heaven than you are to earth, if some finer soul does not storm you and compel you to look up. A wild thing to God as you

are to man, in the way in the higher as you are in the lower life, and bound to take what comes; for this has all been settled in a court from which there is no appeal.

It is not hard to realize, then, how this was the human lot and these the human folk over which his heart was yearning that day; and so he meets them on their own ground, and opens to them the lesson of the lilies. These are of no account, he says,—wild things and in the way, to be mown down or pulled up and consumed, and you think there is good riddance. But just look at the cup of that wild lily: did any whiteness in the palace of Solomon or any purple he ever wore touch the pure splendor of those petals? Was any silk ever equal to their sheen, or fretted gold equal to that you can find in their heart? any line of beauty man ever drew like the curve from the base to the edge of that cup, or any incense equal to their sweet perfume? No man cares for them; but do you not see how God cares? He gave them their beauty and sweetness, and maintains them in the world, come what will; for he must and will have wild lilies.

And so you will see from this word of the lilies first, and then of those to whom the word was spoken, what a large and gracious meaning may lie within this thought! The beauty and worth of it, as of so much besides in the Gospels, lies just here: Jesus does not seem to care either for the lives or the lilies over which the world bends with the deepest admiration, but leaves these to speak for themselves, and takes up those that need such an advocate and interpreter before they can appear to us in their true worth.

Because we must of course conclude that there was a great wealth of lilies in the world that day, which held in their cups the culture of all the centuries since God put man in a garden to dress it,—flowers about which men were busy, no doubt selecting and arranging them in orders of nobility as we do now, wondering over them for their beauty and sweetness, and preserving them in gardens and

conservatories with the care fitting, to their minds, for plants of such rare worth; lilies like that out of whose cup the sacred books of India say Brahma sprang; lilies like those Layard found in the royal palaces of Nineveh; or like that Sir Gardiner Wilkinson copies from the brow of an Egyptian princess, where it hangs like a great jewel; or those Sir William Jones had in a vase in his room when a man came to seek audience from Nepaul, and, seeing the flowers, bowed before them as a devout Catholic bows before a shrine.

Some such rare flowers our divine Teacher might have taken to illustrate his discourse, saying to those about him, "Look at these, and tell me whether God has not revealed himself in all this beauty and worth." But these wild things about the skirts of Tabor, or these in the standing corn,—lilies lurking in the meadow grass or haunting the marshes and tossing their heads in the wind all over the land,—these were of no great worth, and usually in the way; wild things that had never been touched by culture or made sacred through centuries of reverence, but had just taken care of themselves with only God to help them, and, as sure as summer came, had foamed over out of their hiding-places, so that those who wanted a world full of green grass and corn would feel a good deal more like cursing them than bowing before them with the children of the East, and be a great deal more ready to believe the evil one had hidden himself in their cups than Brahma, the first of the incarnations.

How could he take these to his heart, and say such a sweet and good word about them that human hearts had to treasure it and write it in a gospel, and send it down through all these ages, fresh as the flower was of which he spoke so tenderly that day!

And, as he might have chosen his flowers, so he might have pointed their moral, and been careful, as we are so often, to narrow his lesson of God's regard down to those

who might well be deemed most worthy. For, as there was a favored flower then, so there was a favored humanity, where all the choicest instances come home to us of the worth of culture and fair fortune as proofs of God's grace: men and women of the rarest worth and beauty in life and character; persons about whose welcome there could be no doubt, whose place was assured to them and whose loss to the world would leave a gap which to men's minds could never be filled; men and women of a distinct genius, whose sermons in the synagogue or pleas at the bar or cures in the hospital or creations in the finer arts or in histories or stories or poems mark an era or create a school in the life of a nation, or who have such endowments of goodness or of valor that they become saints and heroes by simply living out their life.

Very easy it would have been, even in those barren and dismal days, to point out those who were instances to the time of the supreme orders; or, if there were none in life, then there were plenty in history, to which the whole heart would have responded at the mere mention of their names. No doubt about the place these held in the common heart, any more than there is about the great dead, in the Poets' Corner, at Westminster Abbey,—grand presences in the nation's life, whose names are still emblazoned. But here is what you might call that wild lot, the common people, the masses, as we brand them, fishermen and herdsmen, peasants and publicans, people of small account to the upper ten thousand, and of small account, it may be, even to themselves, men and women whose lot it was, perhaps, to draw their first breath in a house where they were not very welcome, to whom life from the start had been a hard fight for the survival of the fittest,—so hard, indeed, that all the fitness, as we count it, had been lost in the survival, who must be cut down and consumed, perhaps, by war or pestilence, before they had a fair chance to open to the sweet influences of heaven, or be hedged about with the thick-

growing thorns of evil, penned up in mean homes, so that they would take to drink for a momentary gleam of what seemed like heaven to them in the very fires of hell, or be led into other evil ways through the strong pull of passions they had never been taught to curb and guide. The wild lot making their way into life without leave or license, to leave it again and make no sign, just to reveal a touch of beauty for those who had eyes to see it or send some grain of sweetness from among the thorns, and then to pass away. These were the men and women to whom the great yearning heart said, "God cares for the wild things growing all about you; and are ye not much better than they?"

So it is that, when we leave them there about the mountain-side, and bring the truth home to our own life, and the life of those about us, we can see what a divine wisdom there was in this turning away from the noblest and best, and touching those on whom the world looks down with disdain or dislike, for a lesson of God's love.

Because the tendency of our time and of all time is to keep our most genuine admiration within the gardens and conservatories of our humanity, if I may say so, to the exclusion of the wilderness, and to believe only in the grandest and noblest natures, or in those who have experienced what we call a "change of heart"; while we usually care in no such way for those who can put forth no great claim to excellence, or look on them with some such dislike as the farmer feels toward the wild things that vex his land.

But the steady truth about all time and the vast preponderance of life is this: that, while our reverence for a true nobility is the proof of a certain nobleness in our own nature, and we can never overestimate the worth of it or the proof it brings home to us of the divine presence in this world, yet it is, after all, but as the lilies that had grown to their high worth through centuries of care, in comparison with the wild things that were shedding their gleam of beauty and their touch of fragrance through the corn and

over the pastures. So, if this vast mass of humanity, which may well include your life and mine, is to have no part or lot in God's loving care, then woe worth the world! for it would be in such a case a hideous and haggard failure.

Because the truth, you will find, in a great city like New York, is about as good on the average as you will find anywhere,— that an enormous majority of us are of no account except as we can reveal some gleam of beauty and breath of sweetness by being simply what we are, without any radical change at all; men and women by tens of thousands, not cultured as we define culture, or of a special genius as we define that, but quite of the common order,— the wild lot, with a wild tang and tendency in the grain of their nature, very much in the way sometimes, and compelled to make a stern fight for existence (cumbering the ground, if God wants the whole world this instant for corn and timothy, and wants no wild things within the circle of His husbandry),— here and there a man or woman of the finest type, in whom the divine grace is not to be mistaken, with a touch of genius in them, or of heroism, or of pure goodness, the choice garden flowers of our kind, to whom a good life is in some true sense as natural as singing is to a lark.

And then beside these, outside all the fences of distinction, we put down this whole wild lot in the shadow and the sun, in the marshes and the wilderness, not very beautiful and not very sweet, except as with the good Christ you can make a large allowance and see the touch of God's hand where the most of us are sand-blind to such a revelation. The base things of this world, the things that are despised and the things that are not, except as God has chosen them, wild things which have to be fought sometimes and got under or they would ruin the hope of the harvest,— they still hold a gleam of grace in their heart and a breath of sweetness those only know of who stand nearest to them, coming forth from God, though the whole world says they

are of the devil, and going back to God as to the sole heart that can understand them and take them in, and say the great "Well done!" for their poor scant doing.

Here, then, is the large truth touching the wild lilies. But within this I find truth, more special and personal, I do well to lay to my heart and make good in my life.

I. That, if I think I am of the garden, and plume myself in this fine advantage, it will be a good thing for me to look through the fence, sometimes, toward those who live their life in the wilder reaches and the harder lot, to look as the Christ did, and consider them in the light of his love, tenderly, and remember that just as I exclude them from God's regard I am unworthy the good name "Christian." He met such men and women frankly, and treated them with a most generous regard. He would have them be true to their own better nature; and then he was content, because he understood how God had ordained wild things and made room for them and bid them occupy until he comes to bring in the nobler order and the better day in his own good time.

II. If I feel that there is a wild quality in my own nature, and that I am of the wilderness rather than the garden, common and unnoted, and as if I was in the way sometimes, or beset by the thorns of harsh or evil circumstances, disheartened at my poor low place and at the little I can do to amend things within or about me, let me think then of these wild things in the pastures about the skirts of Tabor, with the thorns about them, and how they manage somehow, after all, to keep sweet about the heart, to maintain the upward look and the color which gleams like a glimpse of heaven, and then listen for this word of Christ, "Consider the lilies of the field," and so believe that I am very near to God when all is said, and I can do my best and be my best, keep the touch of sweetness in my heart, the upward look from among the thorns, and be hopeful with it all, be patient and not over-troubled about what is to befall me; for the wilderness is God's land

as certainly as the garden, and is better beyond all telling for the wild things than it ever could be as a blank desolation. I am here for some real use, or I should not be here at all; and the one thing I do know beyond this is that I must be my own truest and best self, then there will be a better for me climbing always toward the best. The one thing I must not do is to grow sour and sad, and hang my head until it is soiled with the mire out of which I grow, or let the thorns have it all their own way.

For how many I have seen, in my time, who have lost their chance through this downward dip, and then again how many I have seen beset with the thorns, obscure and of no account to the world about them, who were still sweet and good at the heart, when you once got at them, with gleams of the very grace of heaven shining in and through them, wild witnesses for God in the thick of harsh and evil surroundings where he wants wild witnesses and must have them, or his world will not be perfected!

III. If I have those very dear to me who take to wild ways, while still, as so often happens, there is a real native grace in them, and goodness, who will not and cannot conform to the order of my home or walk in my footsteps or stay in my church and conform to my faith, but will cut across all my traditions and usages, as young Shelley did,— it may be for the same reason that, while I am of some useful, homely sort, God has given a young eaglet into my nest, a wild thing that will be soaring and circling at its own will and bringing me dismay instead of a comfortable and quiet assurance,— let me then consider the lilies and God's hand in them and his care for them, and sorrow not as those that have no hope. It is right that I should be true to my own light and my own nature, and look to those who are to me as my own life to be like me also. But my nature may be one thing, and theirs quite another; and then all I can do is to help them to be and do their best under these new conditions. How many children would have done well at last

who turned to sin and shame, had good fathers and mothers understood this secret of the wild variety, and made a large allowance for the difference they could not understand,— the sons of ministers and members in good standing, wild boys, but not wicked, the old Berserker blood we brought from the north afire again in their veins, plunging into the strong floods of life, while their natural guardians believe only in the quiet pools, told sternly that this is all godless and the way to hell until they believe it, but do not care, and then told of God's hatred until they hate him in return or sink into a blank and utter atheism! In no one thing I can ever encounter do I need this large look of Christ toward the wild lot as when I find I have raised a wild boy, and must still have the grace to make him believe in himself and become the best he can be with that nature, and to believe that God cares for wild boys as he cares for wild lilies, and will still be with him to challenge him and help him master the thorns, to grow sweet and good through it all.

Multitudes of men have been saved through this gospel of the worth of what is wild, but still wholesome; and multitudes have been lost through the want of it, killing out the germs of self-respect and saying, God has no place in his providence for such as you: your end is to be burned.

We want the whole world we care for most to be in and of the garden. It never has been so and never will be until the whole world has risen into the better life. So, when those very dear to us take to these wild ways, we must do our best for them, and not break our hearts about it; while this is not so hard a thing to do when we believe with Jesus that God has a place and a purpose for the children of the wilderness as surely as for the children of the garden and conservatory,— that the noblest were wild once, and the wildest will grow noble in God's long day, through his high grace and their own good endeavor.

Then we must be sure of this finally: that this whole world is God's world, within the fences and outside them,

better and worse, but still God's world; that all this pottering and pondering about the way he must stand related to us and we to him, because we believe certain dogmas and observe certain ordinances of this or that church, is time thrown away, except as it can result in making me a nobler and a better man. It is the contact of the divine spirit with our own, as the sun smites the lilies, and the rain and dew touches them from cup to root. It is being made strong by the Spirit's might in my inner man, so that I become a whole, true man of my kind, whether I am in the wilderness or in the garden, beset with thorns I cannot master, or growing in clean spaces with all the chances at a true nobility that ever came to man. This is God's world; and he needs men in it to run with the fire-engine as surely as he needs men to preach in pulpits, to do the rough work as surely as the fine work. And so the good minister was not so far out of the way, after all, when, in preaching a funeral sermon, and in straits for something good to say about the dead man, he cried, "Brethren, I will say this: he was the best man I ever knew at a fire." For, as men are made, they are pretty sure to take a tang from the nature of the work they have to do,—yes, and to bring one with them as the very condition of their taking hold, just as Esau was a wild man and a hunter, and Jacob was a very tame man who kept sheep; while in our heart of hearts we all love Esau best.

This is God's world, and he needs all kinds, and will have them. So, when we can look on it with this wide and gracious glance out of the heart of Christ, we shall not be over-troubled about what is going to happen to-morrow, if we do our best to-day. It was in his hands before we came into it, and will be when we have gone away; and his tender mercies are over all his works and all his children.

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M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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"Some great cause, God's new Messiah"

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RESERVES

BY

REV. ROBERT COLLYER

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NOTE.

Rev. Dr. Savage being still unable to occupy his pulpit, Rev. Robert Collyer preached on Sunday, February 12. Dr. Savage will resume his pulpit work as soon as possible, and will then continue the series on "Immortality."

RESERVES.

"The wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps." — MATT. XXV. 4.

THE parable of the ten virgins is, on the whole, a sad story. You do not care for the one-half of them the instant after they enter the door, or before, for that matter, when you once find them out, and note what seems to be their utter selfishness. Your heart stays outside with the five who are peering in through the windows, listening to the music, and weeping while the others are dancing.

You say to yourself, "It is too bad," and want to open the door and let them in, also; and wonder why the Master is not of your mind. You straightway begin to make excuses, and to find reasons for a better conclusion than this which is written.

"There was no harm in them," you say. "They were only thoughtless." And even this might come, in this case, through their eager haste to be on hand, and that was, in itself, a fine trait; while their lamps may have gone out through the boundless generosity of their burning, and those of the other five been kept alight by parsimony in the use of the oil, as well as the forethought which provided a reserve. At any rate, you would like to know the rights of all this before you make up your mind to leave these poor damsels to their distraction; and, even if you were sure it was a just judgment, you would still owe those insiders a grudge for not squeezing out a few drops, at least, to help their sisters up to the door at some risk to their own lamps, so that they might all go in or stay out together, or, what would be well worth the trying, trust that on his wedding-day, at any rate,

the master of the feast would be of a generous mind, and say, "Come in, every one of you," when they all came in the dimness to the door, and told him how it was no use thinking of leaving the one-half there on the street to take their chance at the closed doors. So their lamps had *all* gone out through a motive they were sure he would admire, above all things, in his own wife.

Neither are you satisfied with the way in which the parable is commonly made to open only toward a spiritual truth. In the German there is a story of Frederic, margrave of Misnia, who in 1322 went to see one of the old mystery plays drawn from this parable, in which the five wise virgins were the noblest women the playwright could imagine; but they had grown hard and stern as fate to those who had no oil, and left them outside, weeping and wailing and gnashing their teeth, which when the prince saw, he was so amazed that he fell into a grievous sickness, crying, "What is our faith, then, if this is where it ends?" died the fourth day after, and was buried at Eisenach.

And we are of the margrave's mind. If our faith means anything, you say, it means helping each other in sore straits at any cost, and growing rich by giving rather than by hoarding; while about the meanest thing a man or woman can do is to nourish the idea of crowding into whatever bliss may be waiting, no matter who may be outside, and having your fill of joy while your old comrades are in despair.

It is a fair objection, born of all that is most generous and noble in our human nature, and, by consequence, most divine. It seems as if such a selfish spirit would make heaven itself anything but welcome to those of wider sympathies and a deeper pulse of grace, when they found themselves in such company. And so these interpretations are rejected as unworthy the grand and generous soul of the gospel of the Son of God.

But I think the truth is that we fall into this trouble, and

many more of this kind, through our misconceptions, and say one thing when our great Teacher means another, so it is of the life to come which is in his mind, and, least of all, our notions of that life; but the life right here they had to live in those days and we have to live now, and the kingdom of heaven is no far-away world among the lights and shadows of eternity, but the life of God in human souls on this earth; while even then it is not that life, as we insist on it in our sermons and systems, but the widest and deepest relation of man to God we can imagine, meeting us at every turn and keeping the record of all we do. This is the way, therefore, the parable I want to touch opens to my mind.

There was trouble in the air as Jesus was speaking. He saw it through his divine insight; while those about him still felt safe and sure of their lives and fortunes, and would not be disturbed of their rest.

It is coming, he tells them, once and again, as a thief in the night; and no element in it, as he foresees, will be more terrible than its surprise. It will be like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky, like the swift agony of fire in a sleeping city, like the spring of a wild thing as you walk without a fear through the quiet glades of a forest, like all great trials now and forever, exactly when you least expect them.

Then he foresees how there will be a division among those who spring out of their slumber to meet the demand of the new day,— how some will possess reserves of light and life, and the power to hold their own right on to the end, while others who have no such reserves will have to give up and lose their place, submit to the loss, and stand outside. And this must all come through a law against which there is no appeal, and for which there is no help except through seeing to these reserves in good time, and so being prepared for the crisis when it comes suddenly on us all alike.

There may be the best desire in the world on the part of those who will go through to aid those who are falling back;

but there is no margin, and so no way. The reserves must be there and ready to be poured out, and then the end of it all will be glory and honor; but not there, it is too late to create them, and the end must be disgrace.

It is not a question of sentiment, therefore, but of life on its last issue and trial, and is not so much of the way we shall win into heaven, first of all, as the way we shall live to the grandest purpose on the earth. And, when we set the parable in this light, it is not hard to see how it touches our own life and time, and brings the truth home no man can afford to neglect: that we must also have something to fall back upon when this cry comes, or we can never spring forward to any great purpose,— reserves of life or light, of courage or character, of insight or endurance, or whatever the demand may be (for, failing here, it is as when wells fail in a dry time, because they have no deepness or power to reach the perennial springs),— that in our common life we may do as well as those about us, or even seem to be doing better, if we are reckless as to these reserves while others are carefully storing them away. But such times are no test of a man or a manhood any more than the piping times of peace, when they flame out in scarlet and gold about London, is a test of the Queen's Guards, or than our own men were tested when they went southward through our streets with their music and banners. It is Waterloo and the Crimea, Chancellorsville and Ball's Bluff, and such grim backgrounds as these, against which they must stand before the matchless manhood of such men can come into bold relief and reveal itself finally.

And so we can all run easily enough through our easy-going times, make good headway, as we imagine, and hold our own with the best; but these days have no virtue in them to reveal this secret of our reserved power.

They are like the main part of a voyage I made once across the Atlantic, in which the weather was so pleasant and all things ran so easily, that I suspect the most of us

felt about equal to the captain, and concluded it was no great thing to run a steamer, after all, when you once got the lines.

But when a great storm struck us as we passed Cape Race, and all night long the good ship shuddered and panted through the wild waters, and when next morning, peering deckward, we saw the faithful captain standing by the mainmast, with his arms twisted about the ropes, swinging in the tempest, watching it with steady eyes, alert and cheerful, though he had been on deck all night, turning his ship round in the teeth of the tempest and the trough of the sea, so that she might escape the awful strain and the avalanche of waters which were filling men with dismay, *then* we knew our captain.

The reserves were coming out. Here was a man nothing could daunt, and who, if the worst had come, would no doubt have seen still to our safety, so far as he was able, and been the last to leave the wreck.

That man had light in him, and life, equal to the demand, — oil, in a word, in the vessel with his lamp; and so he brought the good ship at last to her haven, and won the good "Well done!"

I. And this demand, when we bring it home, touches, first of all, our life itself; for your wise doctor will tell you that about the best thing you can do is to keep as fine a reserve of vitality as you can possibly store away, if you mean to give him a chance, when some day he has to help you pull through in the sore conflict between life and death, to which we are open, exactly, perhaps, when we least expect it.

And how many times we have all heard that same sad story, "Nothing could be done for him, because there was nothing to fall back upon: he had no reserve of power to fight through, he used up all his life as he went along"! and that most cheering story on the other hand, "He was about as sick as a man can be to live; but he had a splen-

did constitution and great reserves of power, and so he pulled through."

Here, then, is the first meaning of oil in my vessel with my lamp, as it lies in my very life. I can be wary and foreseeing about this blessing on which all other things I can be and do down here must rest; and then, when the last stern test comes, it is as if so many more strands were cabled about the one slender thread. So many a life has ended all too soon through what we call a mystery of Providence, when the most heedless and reckless improvidence has really used up the reserves of power; and we should be careful how we use such a term or go after a mystery, while the simple truth waits right under our eyes.

We use up these reserves, and are smitten by a sickness which would draw on all our powers if we had kept them stored away; but they are used up. And then I speak as a man when I say that the eternal God is as powerless to pull us through as the good doctor is, while, if it were otherwise, we can imagine no greater misfortune; for we should all turn spendthrifts, in the assurance of getting a renewal.

There is no such subtle temptation to improvidence as that which lies in the feeling that the High Powers will suspend the law, if we do but cry loud and long enough. And another truth waits to be touched before we pass this first line,— this, namely: that these reserves of life mean more than mere living. They mean what the Master hinted at,— "an enduring brightness breaking into joy."

Because the man who has the most life, and still knows how to use and store it, has usually the most worth of life.

The grace and glamour of existence come of the overplus of oil. Show me a man who is running forever on a close margin, and I will show you a man who has more than his share of dark, grim days,— one to whom the beauty of the spring, the glory of the summer, the ripeness of the fall, and the white splendor of winter often come on bootless errands.

The reserves mean not mere living, then, but what gives

life worth in this natural and simple sense; and we may all cry, who hold these empty lamps to our sorrow,—

> "'Tis life whereof our nerves are scant,
> Life and not death, for which we pant,—
> More life, and fuller, still we want."

II. These reserves mean, in the second place, character; and we can store up character as we store up life, if we take care and become so rich and strong that, when these sudden and searching emergencies try us as by fire, we suffer no loss, but come out perfect and entire, lacking nothing. For you can all name men in our own town of whose stout and sterling manhood you feel so sure that, if one should come to you in the guise of an angel of light and accuse them of knavery, you would look for the cloven foot,— men to whom you could trust your life and fortune and sacred honor, and go to sleep without the least tremor of fear after all the revelations of weakness and wantonness touching great trusts that are enough to wither the heart.

They are men who store up these reserves of character,— treasures of insight and foresight, of fortitude and courage, — and never lose their head, no matter how the solid earth seems to rock in panic and convulsion, but are strong and quiet, and keep their lamps shining full and clear through the darkness. The trial of their character may come, then, when it will, whispering tongues may poison truth, the fearful and unbelieving may desert them, and those even who believe in them most thoroughly may be troubled; but their reserves will not fail, the clear shining from their lamp will not end in a smoke and a stench. They will stand in the evil day; and, when they have done all, stand.

The man who has just conduct and character enough to run along in easy times, but lays up no reserves on which he can draw when the cry strikes the midnight of disaster, can have no great peace or joy; but he has both who stores up

the reserves on which he can draw when the challenge comes to hold up the light.

III. These reserves mean, in the third place, achievement, the power to do the grandest thing possible to our manhood or womanhood when we feel we must, to cube our power out of the latent stores, to do well always, but best in the crisis on which all things turn, to stand the strain of a long fight, and still find we have something left, and so never to know we are beaten, because we never are beaten.

When the great Duke of Bridgewater undertook to construct those canals which lie at the root of the vast wealth of modern England and had their part in the splendor of our own metropolis, he found the strain so hard at last that he was glad to get a note accepted for five pounds. He gave up his princely mansion, lived in a small house, and clad himself so humbly that one day, as he was standing by a great pile of his own coal, a boy, thinking he was a common person, cried out to him, "Here, man, give us a lift with this sack." He loved his bit of humor, so he took hold with the boy, and got for his thanks, "Ah! man, thou's big enough, but thou's lazy."

But he came at last to the end of his reserves of money, and courage even; and on a Saturday night, sitting with Brindley, who had borne the burden with him, the mighty engineer said, "Well, duke, don't be cast down: we are sure to pull through"; and they did pull through, and Brindley found the strength for it in the last drips of oil in the vessel. But he found it; and the result was the first splendid stroke which set England on her feet, and gave you the port you wanted in Liverpool.

And so it is with your life and mine in the things we have to do. We store up life and light for the crisis of well-doing, when it comes an inward and spiritual substance of manhood like that which was noted in our great conflict, when delicate town-bred and college-bred men would tire down the young giants of the backwoods and prairies, out-

fight them and outlive them, and the fine reserves of the Harvard men covered them with glory, while the shallows and brute force of Billy Wilson's regiment ended in disgrace,— an inward substance of manhood nothing can exhaust, bringing us out at last, with our light burning clear to the end of the great and sore trial.

And I have dwelt so long on these more outward meanings of the doctrines of reserves, because I believe they are of the utmost worth in this light to those who would come out worthily from the great last tests of our manhood in life,— in character, and in achievement, and then, again, because they point inward to still deeper and diviner verities. For, as we can store up these things against the trial of our life, so we can store up other and — shall I not say? — better things against the trial of the soul's faith, hope, love, and whatever makes a Christian, as these qualities I have dwelt on make a man or woman.

Because, to speak first of faith, we need not merely enough to live on through our ordinary experiences, but stores of it to fall back on and draw on when ruin and disaster seem to have it all their own way,— when we wake up suddenly to wonder whether God can be in heaven and we be so forlorn on the earth, whether his Christ was not mistaken in his abiding confidence, and all the saints, and what better thing there can be left than just to grit our teeth and bear it, and wait for the long last sleep of death. Millions of poor souls have come to this conclusion in the last trial of their faith: the light has gone out, and there was no oil in their vessel with their lamp. But millions more have struck the same troubles, and have risen out of them, through their reserves, into the very life and light of God. No disaster has overcome them, no trial broken them clean down. It was no matter that the heavens were black as midnight, except for the pain of it, or that "from out waste nature came a cry, and murmurs from the dying sun." The reserves were there; and they drew on them to the last, and

went in to the joy of the Lord. Poor creatures, some of them, who could give no reason why they should hold on so, and stay so cheerful and bright, any more than the fountain can give a reason for its flowing or the plant you find in some deserts for its store of cool water. They have been sending out roots far and wide, tapping the secrets of reserved power and storing up the treasure; and now nothing can exhaust them.

The old Bible has been drawn on, and the stores open to them outside in thought and life; and, above all things, the inward and inexhaustible fountains of God's own life, no danger of the oil giving out, it burns clear away until they pass beyond the vale. Or the sadder thing may come, of shattered hopes and a heart like a stone. No hauntings, any more, of the light of a new dawn, no warm pulse toward earth or heaven, cold ashes only where the fire was, and no more fuel, dead already while we still have a name to live,—paralysis in the centres of the soul, the saddest sight humanity can show; the feeling that things *can* be no worse, and you don't care, that they never will be any better, and you don't care; just a heart emptied of hope for anything any world can offer,—this comes of laying up no reserves, and of a hope which rests on the things which perish in the using, and a love which has never really penetrated beyond the senses.

There can be no reserves in a life like that. We must still touch the unseen and eternal, or we fail in this last test, when the trial comes; and all the men and women I have found in this condition have been those to whom a "good time" was a supreme object. But the blow fell. No man can finally escape. The idol was broken in the shrine; and, when that went, all went.

They wist not, that at the best, these cannot be the final conditions of human love and trust, and that there is a soul within the senses to which we must cleave, and which our soul must follow. No such oil of hope and unslain love

is laid up in these shallow hand-to-mouth ways; and so, at last, it is as if one heard Azrael, the angel, saying, "Put out the light, and then put out the light."

But the man or woman whose life still abides with the things that are not seen, and whose love, while it fills the eyes with light and the ear with music, and transfigures those who are under its sweet spell, still loves the vision better than the sight; and the undying soul time cannot alter except to make more beautiful, or death touch except to transform. These never break down or turn hard and cold, and say, "I will hope and love no more."

There is oil in the vessel with their lamp; and heaven and earth may pass away, but these divine reserves shall not pass away. But there is still another word. One thinks of those poor damsels turning away sadly from the closed doors, but saying, as they went home: "We have learned a lesson this time, we will never be caught again at this sore disadvantage, we will see to the reserves henceforth, and enter with all the rest into the joy." It is but the suggestion of the way in which the infinite tender pity of God opens into endless opportunities to those who hold a hopeful and helpful faith,—the faith that life is a school in which we learn, through failing as certainly as through succeeding, that no man need sit down, even here, and say, "That was my last chance," or have those who love him say what he was down here: forlorn and in the dark he will be forever.

I tolerate no such conception of the pity and love of God. Only one thing can be true, I say, that our extremity is the divine opportunity; and that when one door shuts, soon or late another will open, is as good an axiom heavenward as it ever can be earthward. We must submit to the sorrow and frustration, but we can learn the lesson.

The battle-cry of one of our Indian regiments when they went into a fight one day, and made themselves a wonder of soldiership, was "Chero Busca," the name of an old fight in Mexico, in which their brothers ran away. They burnt

out the disgrace, set the smoke of the old shame itself ablaze, and came home with the light burning clear and high, and were met with mighty sobs of joy by men who thought they had forgotten this sweetest secret of tears. And we can all do this by God's great blessing.

No man need despair here. No man, we may trust, will be permitted to despair hereafter, when he has once learned this lesson of oil in the vessel with the lamp. So, for the sake of this love of God which holds on to us forever, we should hold on to him, and see to these reserves which keep the light shining clear when all grows dark beside.

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M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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MESSIAH PULPIT

NEW YORK

(Being a continuation of *Unity Pulpit*, Boston)

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The Way Where the Light Dwelleth

BY

REV. ROBERT COLLYER

GEO. H. ELLIS
272 CONGRESS STREET, BOSTON
104 E. 20TH STREET, NEW YORK
1899

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NOTE.

Rev. Dr. Savage being still unable to occupy his pulpit, Rev. Robert Collyer preached on Sunday, February 19. Dr. Savage will resume his pulpit work as soon as possible, and will then continue the series on "Immortality."

THE WAY WHERE THE LIGHT DWELLETH.

"Knowest thou the way where the light dwelleth?"— JOB xxxviii. 19.

I REMEMBER how I went to a grand old city in England to see many things I had read about, and among the rest a wonderful cathedral.

It was a dismal morning when I got there, full of mist and rain, through which I could see the cathedral looming up, gray with age, but very grand; and there was one window especially which touched me as I saw it, from no great distance, by its splendid outline and the exquisite delicacy of its carven work in stone.

I could easily see, also, that this window was filled with stained glass. But it was quite impossible even to guess at the design from where I stood outside, because the background within the church was in a deep and dense shadow; nor was it ever meant to be seen from that side by those who had done the work. It was like looking at the wrong side of a piece of fine old tapestry, rude and ragged, and all out of true. So there was no form nor comeliness in it as I stood there, and no beauty that one should desire it.

But then I went within the church, and in an instant was aware of a noble transformation, when the soft misty light came in, revealing the master's intention, and clothing all the figures in a dim gray glory.

Still, even in this there was no great satisfaction. The mist veiled the perfection of beauty: the colors hidden in the glass needed a background of sunlight and a clear sky to come forth in their full splendor; and so I went away.

But about noon the mists rose and were swept away toward the German Ocean, and the sky opened into that tender blue you only seem to see in England in its full perfection,— like blue eyes dim with tears. The sun came out with a mild, fair radiance; and then I went again to see the great window. Well, on the street it was still the same, blurred and blotted, so that the light which lay on it made the figures in the glass seem more uncouth than they were before. But, when I went in again, I saw a great wonder. It was transformed before: it was now transfigured. The whole light of heaven was there for a background, and was smiting the window through and through.

There stood the apostles and the saints in a great cloud of glory, and above and below them the angels, and all about them the arms and heraldries of men who had given great gifts when the church was built or who had done grand deeds for the nation. Nothing seemed wanting now that the heart could desire. The wonderful dyes burned and flamed in the afternoon sun, full and clear; and the whole purpose of the master came to me in this fair light of heaven.

And so, as I have thought of this window now and then among my choicer memories, it has touched me like a bright and cheerful parable of this world of ours, and our life, and of the one true way to find their meaning so that we shall not doubt or fear finally whatever may be our fortune, or think of its order and harmony as I might have thought of that cathedral window if I had still insisted on solving its mystery as I stood outside.

Moreover, I have wondered whether the dimness and dismay which trouble us now and then may not come from our failure to find this true background of the clear heavens and the sun through standing outside overmuch, and looking in toward the shadows, instead of standing inside and looking out toward the light.

And, then, whether we shall not find, as the large result

of all our seeking, that those who have found the finest fitness in this life, and the fairest hope touching the life to come, have always been the men and women who would still insist on finding this background for the problems we have to solve, and then on waiting and watching, at any cost of time and care, until at last the sun came out to make the whole purpose radiant as that window was radiant to me in the clear afternoon.

I. Because, if we glance, first of all, at our common human nature, I think this is what we are sure to find: that there is always a man looking in toward the shadows, and another looking out toward the light.

No single truth we can ponder is more certain than this of the differing standpoints from which we try to make out the mystery of our own life and the lives of those about us.

It may be in the nature of the man or in his wilfulness, an inborn quality, or one which has grown on him through the years. We can draw no line here, propound no dogma, and utter no condemnation, because this human nature of ours is too vast and variant for any private interpretation. All we can say so far, is this: that one man does insist on setting the design between himself and the fairest lights of heaven, while another peers in forever toward the great shadowy vault. And I notice John Bunyan thinks there must be a struggle to enter where the light dwells, and so to see the things which will keep you in heart through your pilgrimage, a certain stern insistence ending in a fight.

So "put down my name, sir," he makes the man of a very stout countenance say; and then the man puts on his helmet, cuts his way through the guards, presses toward the palace "Beautiful," and catches the vision of the eternal day, while the grand old dreamer smiles, and says, "I think, verily, I know the meaning of this"; but then he notices, also, how so many give back, and will not face the stress and storm, as if they felt it was not worth their while to make the fight. And that is the truth, as I take it, of the stand-

point and the vision common to us all, as we nourish this or that temper and turn toward the light or the shadows that touch us all.

II. And once more, when we leave this truth as it lies along the lines of our life, and notice its special power to help or hinder among those who are our example and inspiration, it is not hard to see what worth there is to them in finding this fair light of heaven and the sun.

The grand presences which touch us most potently in the Bible are all men of this make, from Abraham, the friend of God, to that John who stood on Patmos and saw the light which lights the sun strike through the thick shadows, and make all radiant at last down in the mines. It was trouble and dismay and halting to every one of them, when they were looking in toward the shadows. It was a joy that grew into great deeds and great psalms, when they stood at last, as they all do who are of the most worth to us, looking out toward the light.

Poor David despairs, when he stands with his back to the sun: nature is haggard then to his heart, and life a huge turmoil of selfishness and sin. But he goes in and looks out, and then the dismay leaves him; and he sings of fire and hail, snow and vapor, summer beauty and winter storm, all blending in the perfect design, and of man so mean and yet so high, crowned with glory and honor.

It is Paul's trouble again. As he looks toward the shadows, there is no help for the weary and sin-smitten race; and chapter after chapter bleeds with disheartenment, trouble, failure, and utter condemnation. But then he turns, and goes in to where the light of God's eternal love shines through the ugly outlines of life and the black forbidding substances; and then the whole design stands forever to his heart in a golden glory, as he sings that matchless strain, "Who shall separate us from the love of God?"

And I take it to be the very genius of the Gospels that Jesus never stands outside, so far as we are concerned, for

an instant; but from the day when he takes the lilies and holds them up to the sun, and watches the birds on the wing between himself and heaven, from that day to the day when he weeps over the doomed city, but still whispers to those about him, When the worst comes to the worst, then look up,— he is always looking toward the light; and so his word still keeps the world in heart, and helps us, as no other word can help us, to solve the sorest problems of life and time.

Indeed, you will notice that, when he would touch the one singular instance of this spirit which cannot be content to peer in and ponder, but must always have a background of heaven and the sun, he takes a little child, and sets him in the midst, and says, "The kingdom of heaven" — *the kingdom* of heaven — "is like that child." Watch how the small creature is always eagerly looking "where the light dwelleth," and is able to find a bit of heaven in the commonest and poorest fortunes, never trying to spell out the secret from the wrong side, always getting the light to strike all he cares for as yet in the design.

Neighborly and familiar with heaven in his simple heart, and glad for it all as a lark in full song, catching the glory and hiding it away for the days when the mists will fall and the world grow dark and the grace and truth of it may be only a memory.

Now that child solves the problem of the standpoint for us all. His angels do always behold the face of our Father. And this was the grand, sweet truth Schiller told again, when he said, "My whole life has only been the interpretation of the visions and oracles of my childhood."

This is the truth we find in our Bible, then,— the Book which helps us as no other book can help us; the Word of God, when we once find the key. The men in there who help and inspire us to the best purpose are those who cannot and will not be content to believe in the shadows, but will have God's presence, pity, and love, his divine provi-

dence,— himself, in a word,— for a background to the design; and for this they will struggle and strive, if they must, and wait for the mists to rise and the heavens to grow clear, and then in psalm, prophecy, in gospel and epistle, they say and sing these things we hold as the choicest treasure that ever came out of the human soul.

III. And I notice how this is the truth again touching those outside the Bible who have done nobly in helping to reveal the beauty and fitness of the world we live in and the loftier meanings and outlooks of the life we have to live. It was Newton's turn, who weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance; and old Jacob Boeman's, who saw heaven as he sat cobbling shoes, who put Newton, it is said, on the track of the infinite order and harmony, and said to John Wesley, by the mouth of William Law, as the great apostle of Methodism stood looking in toward the shadows, "This is no way to solve your problems: you must get heaven's light for your background, and then you will find your way out of that dismay."

So Wesley heard him and obeyed, saw all the wonder of the great design possible to his day, and travelled forty thousand miles to tell what he had seen to those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death. It was their happy fortune; and it was the very soul of Agassiz, who saw heaven through a pebble. That devout and beautiful spirit, who, whenever I met him, seemed to be standing with the whole sun in his face, went with the young men to the island, you will remember, that merchant prince, and more than prince, had given them for their summer studies, to spell out the meaning of the shells and rocks, the story of what God has been doing on this earth of ours, through a time that smites one like an eternity; and, standing there for the first time with these eager young souls about him, he said, "Let us begin by looking up, each of us, in his own spirit, to Heaven." While I have heard that, to the end of his life, nothing pleased him better than to tell how he

had found no trace of the fairer flowers or the birds that make music until he came on the track of man. And so it was to him as if God had said: "This child of mine shall look on no desolate and haggard world. I will deck it with beauty and touch it with harmony, to meet and clasp the beauty and harmony I have hidden in his heart; and the oriole and the rose shall be to him for tokens of my love."

IV. And is not this the truth, I would ask again, about those in any time whose word is of most worth to us when the problems of life grow so hard and their burdens so heavy? They were men who would insist on looking to where the light dwelleth. There was a great line of men in the old days who could not do this,— stoics, cynics, epicureans, laughing philosophers and crying philosophers, men who kept perpetual Lent and men who tried to make life one long feast and frolic, and all, as it seems to me, because they stood looking in toward the shadow, and could make little of them but dimness and dismay.

And there was one man of their tribe who still stands distinct from his fellows, and above them, who did this one thing. Wandering about the streets of Athens, marching out with the army, or talking with those who would hear him, he still insisted, as far as he was able, on getting this background of heaven, and the sunlight smiting through; and nothing else would satisfy his head or his heart. And so he sits there in his prison, with the cup he must drink, because he will tell of the glory he has seen; and his words are among the sweetest and most wonderful that ever fell from what we are pleased to call heathen lips so that the good Father of the early Church would have it that he was a saint of God and a child of the light and the day.

But Byron said, "I am a torment to myself, and to all who come near me;" and it is not hard to see how this should be so, apart from the vices that smote his life with leprosy. Byron, with all his genius, as it seems to me, was forever looking in toward the shadows.

And De Quincey says, "I noticed the gloom in John Foster's eye travelling over all things with dismay." Well, this was Foster's trouble,— that with all his greatness as a thinker, and his purity and goodness, and love for all things that are good and true, he was always peering in toward the shadows,— human depravity, decrees of doom, hell-fires, ruthless judgments of God, the woful overweight of sin in the human scales, and other things in the Scriptures no man should dare to take for God's truth, as they are commonly interpreted, peering and pondering as Cowper did so often, and Robert Hall sometimes, dwelling on what Bacon calls "the problems dedicated to despair," and preaching "like those dark birds that sweep with heavy wing, cheering the flock with melancholy cries."

They are found to be of no use now,— these ponderings and peerings from the wrong side; and only the glances they did compass now and then of the wholeness and beauty of the design are what we take to our hearts.

So you will notice it is, on the other hand, with the words that win the heart and sweeten and ennoble the life of man. We read the books or hear the discourse of those who are forever looking in toward the shadows; but there is no rest in them, or help in trouble, or light or joy.

We seek bread, and find a stone: we break the egg, and get a scorpion. We do not take such things to the bedside of sick folk, that they may be healed, or pick the kernel out of them for our children. But we know the helpful books and the words of those who have seen some gleam strike through the mystery, and take these for the need we all strike soon or late. The men and women who stand in the front rank of our religious teachers and thinkers — not to sects and cliques, but to the nations — are those who stand within, and look out toward and believe in the light. It is one golden chain from Alpha to Omega. The words that bring their own benediction come to us from those who have stood inside and seen the light striking through, and

who find this to be the last best word,— that "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

V. Such is the truth, as it comes to me, of fronting the light; and now these are some of the lessons we may gather from it to help and hearten us. So does my future here trouble me and my fortune. Are these all a muddle, as poor Stephen says in the story? Then I must lay this truth well to my heart: that the men who win are seldom or never those who are always peering and pondering on the dark side. They are those who get heaven and the sun for a background to their own best striving, and then the fairest fortune possible to us comes through that winsome light; while to lose this is to lose my strongest ally, and I put a cheerful courage on when I stand with my face to the sun.

The successful men in the long fight with fortune are the cheerful men, or those, certainly, who find this fair background of faith and hope. Columbus, but for this, had never found our New World, or men like Sam Adams struck the bell for the Revolution.

Or is there trouble, again, with that which lies deeper? Are my health and strength in peril? I think there can be little doubt of this: that those who are forever looking on the dark side of their illnesses and ailments — peering in toward the shadows when they should face the light — toss away the finest chances left them to get well again, while those who strive for a cheerful background of faith and hope either win health or, if this is not to be, win some high blessing which may come by sickness.

There was an excellent satire under the cap and bells, when the doleful doctor comes to see his patient, and says sadly to the poor man, "There is not one chance in a thousand that you will get well, but I commend you to be cheerful." I want no such Jeremiah when my turn comes to be sick, but a man who will bring me all the good cheer in the world in his eyes, in the tones of his voice, and the touch of his hand, and will say to me, "While there is

life, there is hope, my friend; and I propose to help you make a good fight, and win."

My dear friend Lucretia Mott used to say of a fine old doctor in Philadelphia that his simple presence did his patients more good than his medicine, and was easier to take beyond all comparison,—for this was forty years ago; and such a presence is always a noble medicine in itself.

The contagion of a sunny and cheerful heart helps us always to look toward the light, sets the tides of life flowing again, and cubes all our chances of getting well.

It was a very common grievance among the surgeons who had this good cheer in them, when we used to leap out to nurse our men after the great battles, that well-meaning but woful-looking men of the old school in theology would invade the hospitals, and rob the brave fellows of what courage was left in them by the dolor of their words and the sadness of their presence, when the delicate balances between life and death drew about even, and would very often turn the scale for death. I want no such curate for mind or body, no such doctor or nurse or priest. They must come as the good Christ came, for healing, and not for affright.

'Tis life of which my nerves are scant, then; and, if they have no ministry of life unto life, I can wait until some cheerful soul comes to give me a hand. Or has that trouble smitten me for which, I think, there is no healing? are those who were the very light of my life taken while I am left,—the lambs in the flock, the youth in its fair bloom, the manhood or womanhood in its perfect prime? It is a great and sore trouble (God forbid that I should say otherwise! for then Jesus would rebuke me, weeping beside a grave). But may not the trouble within the trouble, for the most of us, be this: that we look in toward the shadows, so ruthlessly stand with our back to the sun, peer into the vault, nurse our vast and awful sorrow too long, and let this make havoc of us beyond all measure, instead of trying to find the place where the sunlight of the immortal life will smite through the trouble, and stir us to a new hope and expectation?

The one true way, I tell my heart, is to set our very graves even against this background of heaven and the great and sure hope of man.

There have been and are those who find the place where the light strikes through the grave,— yes! the very grave,— and then the whole haggard and hopeless sorrow suffers a change; and we must try to find that place, too, who sit in darkness and the shadows of death. There may be many a thing we cannot make out, after all, as there was to me that afternoon in the great window; but the light is there, burning through, and this is the one grand matter. Death has no dominion when we once find the place where a sure faith and a great hope in God can smite through these shadows of death and the grave.

So, if the truth stands good finally, that some of us will be forever looking inward toward the shadows, while others will never be content until they find where the light dwelleth, let us, please God, be of these last,— children of the light.

Those great souls of the old days and the new, who help and inspire us to the finest purpose, and the most divine, caught the secret of the true standpoint for you and me. Let us stand where they stood, fronting the light.

Let me try to do this as they did,— be wilful about this grand matter, be cowed by no rebuff, tired out by no waiting, and be beaten in no fight. "Here is the rock," they said to me, when I was up among the miners once; "and here is the gold, and we pursue it through thirty-six processes. But there it is, you see, at last. Heft that bar, sir." So wilful would I be for this clear shining of God's resplendent sun, this fine gold of his truth, waiting, watching, and searching for it as those who search for hid treasure.

I think the main trouble with my doubt and dimness, when it comes, is this: that I do nothing about it, but let them have their way,— the men I have been pleased to call my masters, perhaps, who say there can be no light on these things; and I may have been too ready to fall into their humor.

Let me have no masters but the children of light and Him who said so grandly, "I am the Light of the world," because it was so grandly true. Then I shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of life. Do I stand at the portals of life, with the world before me, and wonder how I shall win my way, I will front the light. Do I find dimness in old age, I will explore old Bunyan again, and have him tell me how those that face on toward the end of the pilgrimage come at last to where the sun shineth alway.

Is such a faith as I hold itself in the shadow, not lost out of me, but still full of shadow, why, then, when it is darkest, I will sing with the fine old Wesleyan heart I inherited from my mother church,—

> "In hope against all human hope,
> Self-desperate, I believe."

I will sing until the sun comes out, and hasten his advent by my singing. Nothing can withstand this devouring wilfulness to front the light.

> "Two powers since first the world began
> Have ruled our life, and rule it still:
> Twin forces in the life of man
> Are faith and will.
> The pole-star and the helm of life,
> That sets the head, this gives the force,
> Through seas all peace or storm and strife
> To shape our course.
> The powers that stand in God's own strength,
> In dark and light, for joy or doom,
> Unshaken are the powers at length
> That bring us Home.
> But where is home? *That* faith can tell.
> But what is faith? *That* will can prove
> By striving bravely, working well,
> And fronting God's eternal love."

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MESSIAH PULPIT

NEW YORK

(Being a continuation of *Unity Pulpit*, Boston)

SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

VOL. III. MARCH 3, 1899. No. 22.

SERIES ON

BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

IV. Paul's Doctrine of Death and the Other Life

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PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF DEATH AND THE OTHER LIFE.

I TAKE as my text, from the first chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, the twenty-third and twenty-fourth verses,— "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ; which is far better. Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."

This, you note, is Paul's general view of life and death. Unselfishly, he is willing to abide with the disciples, with those who are anxious to learn the new truth and to carry on his work. He recognizes that it is better he should do it; but note the significance of his feeling, and the strangeness of that significance,—if he could have his own way, he would choose to die. Have there been many companions of Paul in that choice, in the history of the world? He really believed that to depart, and be with Christ, was a good deal better than anything he could find here.

I have chosen to take up the belief and teaching of Paul before that of Jesus, for the reason that the record of his belief precedes the record of the belief of Jesus. That is, in the chronological order in which the books were written, the Epistles of Paul come earlier than the Gospels. I am following the chronological order of the record, then, rather than the chronological order of the teaching itself; and I do it for the reason that it is possible, as I shall point out to you next Sunday morning, that the beliefs put upon the lips of the Master may have been colored by the opinions of the time when the record was made, so there may be a step onward to be observed in the Gospels beyond that which we find in the acknowledged Epistles of Paul.

So much merely by way of introduction and explanation.

We have observed up to the present time, in our study of the history of belief in immortality, that the people of the old world, before Christianity, almost universally held this belief. The exceptions have been so few as to be hardly worthy of our notice. The belief in some sort of continued existence after the fact we call death was practically universal from the beginning of human thought down to the birth of Christ. But note another point along with that. Death has not been regarded as anything desirable. It has been looked upon as a calamity. Going into the other world was not thought to be an ascent, it was descent. The next life was poorer than this, not richer. The men who went down into the shades left behind them the pulsing, breathing life of the flesh. They became thin shadows. They left the blessed light of the sun, the fair blue heaven overhead. They left the green earth, the waving trees, the music of the brooks and of the waves upon the shore. They left the life of ambition, the fierce joy of strife and battle, the aims and hopes of future advance, all the joys of home, of companionship, of husband and wife, of children. They left all that made life seem sweetest and best, and went down into an underworld of shades.

They lived, to be sure; but it was only a kind of half life, and, as I said, not at all to be desired. But, as in the early twilight we hear a note in this direction, and another in that, of some half-wakened bird, that preludes and prophesies the outburst of song that shall accompany the dawn, so here and there, throughout the ancient world, we come upon a note now and then — from India, Persia, China — of hope, of cheer; some one daring to believe that death is not so great a calamity after all. But, for the most part, it is either a sort of Stoic resignation, facing the inevitable and trying to believe that the inevitable must be somehow bearable, or else it is an utter succumbing to a fear of the shadow which cannot be escaped. The condition of the

world may fairly be represented by those words of the New Testament where it speaks of men as "through fear of death all their lifetime subject to bondage."

I wish to give you one splendid illustration of pre-Christian thought and dawning hope in regard to this matter of death. The noblest character — I suppose all of us are agreed — to be found in the ancient world is perhaps that of Socrates; and there is no man who has spoken, if he be correctly represented by Plato, more sweetly, hopefully, grandly, in regard to death, than he. I wish to give you a specimen of that beginning of trust, voiced by Socrates, to be found in the pre-Christian world: —

"Those of us who think that death is an evil are in error. There is great reason to hope that death is a good." See, he does not feel sure about it. "For one of two things,— either death is a state of nothingness and utter unconsciousness or there is a migration of the soul from this world to another.

"Now, if there is no consciousness but a sleep undisturbed by dreams, death will be a gain; for eternity is then but a single night.

"But if death is the journey to another place, and there all the dead are, what good, O my friends, can be greater than this? What would not a man give if he might converse with Orpheus and Musæus and Hesiod and Homer? Nay, if this be true, let me die again and again. I shall have a wonderful interest in there meeting and conversing with the heroes of old.

"Above all, I shall then be able to continue my search into knowledge. What delight would there be in conversing with (the great and good) and asking them questions.

"(And) besides being happier in that world than in this, they will be immortal, if what is said is true.

"Wherefore, be of good cheer about death, and know of a certainty that no evil can happen to a good man either in life or after death. To die and be released (is) better for me."

See what a striking forecast that is of the words of Paul, which I have taken as a text.

"I am not angry with my condemners or with my accusers. They have done me no harm, although they did not intend to do me any good; and for this I may gently blame them."

This, you know, is related as being what he said to his judges when about to drink the hemlock: —

"The hour of departure has arrived; and we go our ways,— I to die, and you to live. Which is better God only knows."

This the magnificent utterance, the wonderful attitude, of the old Greek.

But a new note is sounded with the coming of the Christian hope. In Paul's words there is no question: To die or to live, which is better God only knows. He has no question about it. And it is no Stoic indifference with which he faces the fact of death. He defies Death, smiles in his face, clasps his hand as a friend, and looks forward eagerly to the time when he will be free from his duties and obligations here, and be permitted to take him by the hand and be led out into that larger and grander life. This is the attitude of Paul. "To die is gain," he says in another place; and in another: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul, then, was looking forward to death as the gateway to the all-desired, the consummation of his highest and most brilliant hope.

It will be interesting for us now, I think, to note the general scheme of the world and of the universe, as Paul held it, how he came by these views, and just what they meant at his time. We shall see, as we go on, that they meant something very different from what they mean in the ordinary use that we make of them to-day, or as interpreted in the creeds of the churches.

What does Paul hold? He does not make much of it; but, incidentally, we are perfectly certain that Paul thinks that before the creation of the earth there had been a rebellion in heaven. On a certain date, at a specified time, Christ had been set forth, proclaimed the special Son and representative of God, appointed the leader of the angels. And then Lucifer,— otherwise called Satan, the Devil,— through envy on account of thwarted ambition, he having hoped to fill this position himself, rebels against God and the heavenly order, and leads a third part of the angels, who follow him in this rebellion; and he is cast out of heaven. The blessed felicity of that place is no longer to be disturbed by discord; and so he is hurled down to the abyss, to the home, the place prepared for him. But meantime he occupies a position between the heavens above and the earth beneath; that is, he is released from his imprisonment, is able to escape for the time, that he may tempt and work his will, so far as they submit to it, upon the men and women living here upón the earth. So the New Testament doctrine, generally, and the doctrine of Paul is that Satan, Lucifer, the Devil, is "the Prince of the Power of the Air." There is a kingdom of evil spirits in the atmosphere about us, between the earth and the sky.

This is the general idea which Paul held in regard to the rebellion in heaven and the kingdom of evil which the Devil set up in his attempt to thwart the purposes of God in the creation of this world. After this rebellion in heaven the world is created, the Garden eastward in Eden. You know the story,— how man is tempted by this would-be leader of the hosts of heaven who still continues his warfare against God and his Christ and all good, and how he fell as the result of this temptation. And with this fall the apostle teaches that death, hitherto unknown in any world or any epoch, comes upon men. Death enters by the doorway which sin has opened. It is God's penalty for the evil which men have wrought.

It would appear that Paul believed what we know to have been a common opinion of his time; that, if there had been no sin, men would have lived, either forever here on this earth, as they could hardly have held if they had thought a little deeply about the matter, or that, after they had lived an indefinite time here, they would be translated, perhaps transformed and spiritualized into another kind of being, and permitted to enter into the presence of God in the heavens above. This was to have been the course, if there had been no sin; but sin came, and then "death passed upon all men," to use the words of Paul, "for that all had sinned."

Now what became of these persons who were thus subjects of death? Where were they? They were in the underworld. We must think clearly if we wish to get the idea of Paul and make it real to us, what kind of universe it was in which he lived. Paul's universe was a sort of three-story affair: there was this earth, the dome of blue above, and beyond that a little way was heaven, where God had his celestial court; but no men were there. Not a man from the foundation of the world — with the possible exception of Enoch and Elijah — had ever entered the presence of God in heaven. And then, underneath the surface of this flat earth, the underworld, as approachable as any island of the sea, if only a person could find out the way,—the underworld of the dead, a cavern, Sheol, Hades; and all the dead, good and bad together, went down into this underworld. And it was some thousands of years before the idea of separating this underworld into two parts entered the minds of the Hebrews. But by the time of Paul there was a place of suffering, called Gehenna,—that is the Greek form for the Valley of Hinnom, this being a place where the refuse of the city was cast out to be burned; and so this is used as the figure of moral and spiritual refuse, the place of destruction. And on the other hand was paradise, a place where the good souls waited until the end of their captivity should come.

All, then, the good and the bad, were held captive by death and shut up in this underworld. When were they to be released, and how, according to the belief of Paul? It was the belief of the Hebrews in the later part of their history that at the coming of the Messiah all the Jews, at any rate those who had believed in the Messiah and had waited for him, were to be raised up from this underworld, reclothed with their bodies and become subjects of the Messianic kingdom, permitted to live here in the glory of that time which they had seen in dream and hope far away, and which they had done their share in preparing for. This was the general belief of the Hebrews. Paul, of course, shared this belief. We must remember that he was a Pharisee; and, if there is any point in his creed concerning which we are in darkness, we shall be safe in supposing that he held the ordinary, Pharisaic doctrine relating to it.

But a change came over the faith of Paul. He accepted at last the idea that Jesus was the Messiah the Jews had been so long looking for. But, at the advent, Jesus came when they were not expecting him. He came, too, as a feeble child: he grew up unknown; and there was nothing strange happened at the time of his advent,— no resurrection of the dead, good or bad,— and he lived to be thirty years old before anybody found out that he was the Messiah. Then, as Paul believed, he was revealed to the inner few as the expected Christ. Paul believed that he was the Christ; for, as you read his Epistles, you will notice that one of the great points in his preaching everywhere was his attempt to convince his Hebrew hearers that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah.

Nothing happened, then, at the advent. So far the general expectation of the Hebrews was disappointed. Now what change took place in their faith? A belief arose in a second advent. Jesus had been a different kind of Messiah from what they had expected: he had come to suffer and to die instead of to reign. But at last they came to hold that

this was as an atonement for sin, in order to break down and do away with the old Mosaic law, and that after his death (his atoning death of sacrifice) he was to come again. A second advent was looked for; and at this second advent all the wonderful things were to happen which had been expected at the time of his first coming, on the part of the ordinary Jews.

Now what did Paul believe was to happen? First let me answer a preliminary question: When did Paul expect this second advent to take place? It is very curious to see how people turn and torture and twist Scripture to bring it into accordance with their preconceived ideas; but, if there is any one thing that is absolutely certain, it is that Paul and all the apostles and the early disciples, and the early churches generally, believed that Jesus was to come in the clouds of heaven to put an end to this present world dispensation, and to usher in the next epoch, and that he was to do it immediately — that is, at least within the present generation then living. They preached that he might come at any time. They were to look for him as a thief comes in the night, unexpectedly; they were to watch; they were to be ready. "In such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh": as lightning shineth from one part of heaven to another, so the coming of the Son of man shall be. Paul talked as though this was to be immediately. All the disciples so talked. The New Testament is on tiptoe of expectation.

What did Paul expect to happen when he did come? He expected that the world would be roused by the sound of the archangel's trump ringing from one end of heaven to the other, startling those that were not ready, not expecting it, and thrilling with joy those who had waited and were prepared. And what was to happen? At the sound of that trump the dull ears of those that were in Hades were to become attentive and listen. The dead in Christ, those who had died believing and hoping in Christ, were to rise

first. There is a curious illustration of the reality and vividness of this belief to be found in the Epistles to the Thessalonians. Evidently, the Thessalonian people had expected that all the believers were going to live until this second advent was made manifest. And they were disturbed when one after another died; and they wrote to Paul, and said: What does this mean? Are these persons that have suffered, been persecuted, and been waiting for the coming of Christ, to die, after all, and not see the glory in which they have believed? Then Paul writes them a comforting word. You will find it in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians. He says: Do not be disturbed. Do not expect the coming too suddenly. There is to be a revelation of evil breaking loose and accomplishing certain things before that coming. But the point for your consolation is this: those that are alive are not to prevent (*prevenio*, the word meaning to come before) those that are asleep; that is, those of us who are alive when Christ comes are not to be any better off than those who have died, because at the sound of that trump those who have believed and waited for Christ are suddenly to rise, and we who are alive are to be changed in a moment, "in the twinkling of an eye." We are not to die; but we are to pass through this miraculous transformation,—put off our present bodies, be clothed with our spiritual bodies, join those who are raised from the dead, and meet the Lord in the air. This is Paul's comfort to the Thessalonians, who wondered if they were going to lose anything by being dead before this marvellous advent took place.

Now I wish you to note what is of prime importance,—the significance of the fact of resurrection. Jesus was to do two things by his life, sufferings, and death and his rising again from the dead. In the first place, he was to abolish the law. It had been found by trial that the law did not make people good: it only revealed to them their wickedness, their evil. They were unconscious of it without the law; but the law, holding up its strict claim, showed them

what failures they were. So Paul said it was impossible to be saved by the law, because no one could keep it. The only hope was in the abolition of the law and the setting up of a kingdom of grace. The law made a terrible mistake when it put to death a perfect being. It abrogated itself by so doing, and became thenceforth a dead letter. So Christ abolished the law. The next thing he did was to bring life and immortality to light. This is according to the opinion of Paul. Paul does not care anything about the physical resurrection of Jesus from the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. When he speaks of those who had seen the risen Jesus, he classes himself among them, although he distinctly says he never saw Jesus in the flesh. He saw him in vision on the road to Damascus,— saw him, as he claimed, in his spiritual body. This is what Paul meant by seeing Jesus.

But the thing that Paul insisted on was that Jesus was alive, and not dead; that he had escaped from Sheol, or Hades, and ascended into heaven; that he had broken the bonds of death through the power of the Father, so that death could no longer hold him; and he had demonstrated the power of life by becoming — what? The "first-fruits of them that sleep." In other words, note, Paul says that Jesus, or the Christ, was the first one from the foundation of the world who ever escaped from the prison-house of death, underground, and ascended into heaven. He was the first-fruits from the dead.

I wish you to note here that Paul is a Unitarian. Paul is not the kind of Unitarian that you and I are. He is what we should call to-day, conforming to theological distinctions, an Arian. He believed in the pre-existence of Christ, that he had lived in heaven. But he distinctly says of him that he was the first-born among the creatures, "the first-born of every creature"; not the Creator, not the original, primal God. He is the first-born of the creatures in his advent, the first-born from the dead in his resurrection, which demonstrates that men can be raised from the dead.

And now, as illustrating Paul's belief concerning the Christ, and his general belief, let me call your attention to the chapter which I read, this famous fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. I wonder that the people who believe in the literal resurrection of the body should not have noted the teaching of Paul, or, noticing it, should have paid no attention to it. Paul distinctly and definitely says that the body that is to be raised is not the body that was buried. He says: You plant a grain of wheat. That which is raised is not that grain of wheat: there is some connection between that and the new life; but this is only a bare grain. God raises that grain of wheat into a glorious body, infinitely finer and fairer than that which is buried; but it is another body such as it pleases God to give. So he says; In the resurrection of the dead that body which is buried in the grave is not to be raised.

And I wish you to note now — for I cannot lay too much emphasis on it, it has been so many years utterly forgotten or misunderstood or misinterpreted — that the resurrection in the New Testament means always the resurrection from this underworld, the coming up again out of Hades, or Sheol, the world of shadow, the prison-house of the dead. It does not mean the raising up of the body; and it does not mean what we are apt to interpret it as to-day, the mere rising of the soul in the moment of death. Paul did not believe that the soul was raised at the moment of death: he believed that it went to Hades, this prison-house of the dead; but the resurrection means, literally, a rising again,— not an ascent, not a coming up, but a rising again after going down, the rising up from Sheol, or Hades, of those who have descended there at the moment of death.

This is the resurrection which Paul teaches; and it is this resurrection — the significance of which lies in the fact that the power of death is broken — that he preaches in regard to Christ. He tells us that, when Christ escaped from Hades and ascended on high, he led with him a multi-

tude of captives accompanying his ascent, the first-fruits of those who had been in Sheol for so long. The significance, then, of the resurrection of Paul was that the power of death had been broken; and henceforth men were delivered from that power.

I wish now to raise the question for a moment as to whether Paul gives us material out of which to construct with any definiteness the other life in which he believed. There is nothing very clear. As illustrating the general subject, let me leave Paul for a moment, and take up one or two passages written by other writers than Paul in different parts of the New Testament. The author of Second Peter — we do not know who he was — tells us that the world and everything connected with it is to be burned up. Some have supposed that this meant that it was to be consumed entirely; others that it was to pass through a furnace of fire, be refined like gold, and come out cleansed and glorified,— a fit abode for the just. Others speak of the first heaven and the first earth passing away, and new heavens and a new earth being created. Others speak of the firmament as being rolled up like a scroll, and put away out of sight forever. And the author of the Book of Revelation gives us a beautiful, poetical picture of a fair city, pearl-gated, gold-streeted, filled with rivers of life and trees of life, descending out of heaven from God, and resting upon the earth.

We cannot with any certainty tell just what Paul's idea was. From all the hints we can gather, I am inclined to believe that Paul trusted that these resurrected souls should by and by be admitted into the presence-chamber of God in the heavens; for he speaks in one place of his having been caught up in a vision into the third heaven, and seen wonderful things and heard wonderful words, which he was not permitted to repeat.

We are glad to find that Paul was a Universalist. It is very significant how strong his language is in this direction,

and also how generally it has been overlooked by those who could find it in their hearts to believe the other horrible creed. Paul teaches that even the Jews — who were rejected on account of their rejection of Christ — were not to be finally passed by. They were rejected only for a time, until the fulness of the Gentiles was brought in. Then they also were to be gathered into the one fold of God. Paul teaches with no questionable note that all souls — good and bad, Jew and Gentile, bond and free — are to be gathered at last into the one fold, with the one Shepherd.

And note that here, in connection with this Universalist tone, he records also his Unitarian teaching. He says: Then comes the end, the wind-up of this great drama that has had the world for a stage, mountains for pillars, clouds for curtains, angels for spectators. Then comes the end, when Christ shall deliver up his kingdom to God the Father. He must reign until he has put everything under his feet — except God, the Power who put everything under him. When he has done that, when all rebellion, all power, all evil that opposes, is put down and is under the feet of the Christ, then he himself is to deliver up his kingdom to God, even the Father, and be subject to him; and God is to be all and in all. This is the magnificent scheme of human history, and its outcome, that is taught us by the apostle Paul.

I wish now at the end to call your attention to two or three points that are instructive and full of meaning, and that throw light upon Paul's position. Paul teaches a doctrine, let me say in the first place, of utter unworldliness. He says we are not to be conformed to this world: we are to be transformed by the working of our minds, and lead a spiritual life. If we have money, we are to be as though we had none; if we are poor, we are not to be troubled by that; if we occupy a high position, it does not make any difference; if we occupy a low position, what matter? You remember that the slaveholders counted Paul as an ally, be-

cause he advised the escaped slave to return to his master: and I believe the old Abolitionists found it very hard to believe in Paul. But in the light of this consideration of Paul's doctrine we have found it divine, sweet, lovely in every way. What does it matter? Paul says. The second advent is nigh. It may be next week, next year, in two or three years, very soon, anyway. What does it matter whether you are married or single, whether you are rich or poor, whether you are a slave or master? These things are of no account. Bond and free, rich and poor, Jew and Gentile, all one in Christ, all brothers in him. These earthly conditions are of no account. It is not worth while to stop to try to change the social or political order. God will take care of that at the second advent, which is imminent at any moment. The more important thing for him to do was to proclaim this gospel over the world

Note, in the second place, how superior Paul is to all suffering. He says, Suppose you are sick, suppose you are persecuted, you are in pain, no end of tribulation: what matters it? Or he says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love him." Why worry about these things, then? "These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Do you not see? If we believed that Christ was coming in a glory to flame from one end of heaven to the other, sounding the trump, raising the dead, leading us all into his eternal kingdom,— if that was a vivid belief of ours,— would we stop to whine or fret or trouble much over present conditions, whether we were sick or well, whether we were afflicted or free from affliction? Note the point of view of Paul. His attitude towards suffering and sickness and evil becomes grandly rational.

One other point at the end, which I must detain you with for a moment. Here you see for the first time in the history of the world, granting his belief was reasonable, a mag-

nificent triumph over death. And it was this victory over death more than anything else, than all things else combined, which gave young Christianity its victory over Rome. Why was it that, when these few feeble, unknown, despised disciples of an unknown peasant of Nazareth went forth into the mightiest empire of the world, they felt confident of taking possession? They visited city after city, preaching their news to the Jews who would listen, and then to the people of all nations; and they were persecuted. Persecuted, why? Not because Rome cared a fig for any man's religion; but because a Christian could not consistently take part in the Roman public worship which Rome held to be the duty of every citizen. Rome persecuted the Christians, not primarily for their religion, but because they were bad Romans. These men could not worship with the Romans, because they had one Master in heaven, and him only they worshipped; but they faced the mightiest power of earth, and they did it eagerly, with joy, with a song on their lips. What cared they, if they were sent to the wild beasts in the arena? They even coveted martyrdom. There are letters of certain old bishops, travelling through the empire on their way to Rome, who are anxious lest somehow or other they may escape martyrdom. They wanted to meet death. They wanted to be among the distinguished company in the other world of those who had died for the faith. Nothing that the Cæsar or any of his legions could do could strike even a momentary terror to their hearts; for they looked in the face of death, and they saw the coming of the heavenly legions, they heard the shout of the archangel, they listened for the trump that was to sound, they saw everywhere the dead rising from this underworld, they anticipated the transforming touch of the divine influence which was to clothe them with immortal life and beauty and glory; and they looked forward to this as the one crown of a faithful life.

This, then, this heartening and giving hope to man, was

that which conquered Rome; for, as the centurions, the officers, the soldiers, the citizens, saw how men could live and love each other and serve each other, and how they did not care for richês or poverty or for high station or low, for pain, how they did not care for death, they said, What is the strange secret these men have found which delivers them from all that we have feared or cared for, and makes them victorious even in the face of the last dread enemy? So at last Paul and his followers conquered the empire; and, by this belief in the immortal life, they changed the face of civilization and gave us the modern world.

And now, Father, we thank Thee for this grand thought, movement, life, and hope of the past; and, though we may have changed our conceptions, we trust we have lost nothing, but that the victory may be ours as it was theirs who stood for Thy name in the days that are past. Amen.

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The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

GEO. H. ELLIS, Publisher, 272 Congress St., Boston, Mass.

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"Some great cause, God's new Messiah"

MESSIAH PULPIT

NEW YORK

(Being a continuation of *Unity Pulpit*, Boston)

SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

VOL. III. MARCH 10, 1899. No. 23.

SERIES ON

BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

V. Jesus and Immortality

GEO. H. ELLIS
272 CONGRESS STREET, BOSTON
104 E. 20TH STREET, NEW YORK
1899

Entered at the Post-office, Boston, Mass., as second-class mail matter

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JESUS AND IMMORTALITY.

I TAKE as a text from the Second Epistle to Timothy, the first chapter, part of the tenth verse,— "He hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

We do not know who the writer of this Epistle may have been. Tradition ascribes it to Paul. At any rate, he holds substantially the Pauline view; and, when he says that Christ has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light, he speaks as one holding substantially the ideas of the universe, of death and the future, as those which I set forth as belonging to Paul last Sunday morning.

It seems strange at first sight that any one should speak of Christ as having brought to light, or revealed, the immortal life, when, as we have seen, belief in this immortal life has been held from the very beginning of the world. Not a tribe, not a people, has been found who did not hold it in some form or other. In what sense, then, can the writer have meant to say that Christ brought it to light? The matter becomes clear when we remember that this writer, whoever he may have been, was unfamiliar with the historical facts which we have so briefly reviewed concerning the beliefs of other peoples; that he writes as a Hebrew, in the light of the Hebrew tradition. And, according to that tradition, all men from the beginning of time at death had gone down into this underworld of which I have spoken; and all of them had remained there until Christ, by the power conferred upon him as a gift from the Father, proves himself stronger than death, breaks through its bonds, escapes, and leads with him a multitude of those who up to that time had been held captive in this region below.

With that view of the universe, then, it appeared literally true that Christ was the one who first brought life and immortality to light.

Our task this morning is not quite so simple as it was last Sunday. We had then, in treating the opinions of Paul, Paul's own words to deal with. We had his letters, the clear and definite expression of his opinions. But, when we come now to deal with the Gospels, which were written, some of them, a good many years after the composition of the Pauline Epistles, we find ourselves front to front with this difficulty: it is easy enough to outline what the Gospels say concerning death and the future life; but we are not quite sure always that we are dealing with the precise and personal opinions of Jesus; for we have no letters of Jesus. He wrote, so far as we know, not one single word,— left behind him no records except in the affectionate memories of those who had been his companions and followers. See now how great this difficulty is.

It is about thirty-four years since Mr. Lincoln died. He lived in an age of printing, of shorthand reporting. He lived most conspicuous, lifted up in the eyes of mankind. His most trivial sayings and doings were noted. It was supposed that they would become a part of history. There are people living to-day who were intimately acquainted with him; and yet note this strange fact. The other day, about the time when his birthday was celebrated, many sermons were preached in many different denominational pulpits in this city concerning the religious opinions of Mr. Lincoln. When a Unitarian was preaching the sermon, Mr. Lincoln was a Unitarian. In Universalist pulpits he was a Universalist. In the orthodox churches he was a good orthodox. In other words, thirty-four years after his death people are already disputing as to his opinions, as to the religious theories he held, and as to what he said and did on a hundred different occasions.

Suppose now, for a moment, that there had been no

printing-press at the time of Lincoln, that there had been no shorthand reporting, that he had never written a single letter or a single document of any kind,— do you not see how much greater would have been the probable confusion and contradiction as to what he really said, as to what he really did, as to what he really believed?

This is the position in which we are in regard to the sayings, the doings, the opinions of Jesus, only intensified by the fact that he lived two thousand years ago,— lived in the midst of an ignorant and very superstitious people, lived when there was no clear-cut distinction in the mind of any one between the natural and the supernatural, lived when anything might happen and when nothing was strange, or when, the stranger it appeared, the more likely it was to be accepted.

I speak of this so that you may note that there is possibly a very wide distinction between the teaching of the Gospels and the real opinions of Jesus. We know, for example, that Plato puts upon the lips of Socrates time and time again his own opinions, or perhaps the opinions of Socrates modified and colored, so that it is difficult to tell where Plato begins and Socrates leaves off. We know the same is true in regard to the record concerning the life and the teachings of the Master. One great principle it will be well for you to bear in mind. If Jesus is reported as saying something which we know to have chimed in with the popular opinion of his time, if he is reported as doing something that everybody expected the Messiah would do when he came, if he is reported as holding some opinion that the popular thought attributed to him as befitting the Messianic office, then you may be a little suspicious of this report.

That is, if there is any mistake anywhere, it would be likely to be in the direction of the popular expectation. But, when Jesus is reported as holding some opinion which was distinct, which was new, which cut across popular prejudices or went contrary to the expectation of his time,

then you may feel practically certain that it is true that Jesus said or did that particular thing.

I needed to refer to this because sometimes this morning I shall be speaking of what I think Jesus really said, and sometimes I shall recur to the general testimony of the Gospels without drawing this particular line of demarkation; but you need to have the idea in mind, if you wish to have clear thinking concerning what Jesus really held and really taught.

Now I wish to note one other point. In view of the popular idea as to the nature and office of the Christ, one of the most remarkable things to me is his silences, his reticences. If he was what the popular theologians have said he was, it seems very striking and strange indeed that he did not say certain things about certain matters concerning which he has been perfectly silent. Let me instance two or three points.

It was the popular belief of his age that there had been a rebellion in heaven, and that the leader of this rebellion, with his followers, had been cast out into the abyss. Now, according to the popular conception of the office of Jesus, he was there. He was the first-born of all the angels. He was the bright archangel who led the divine power that put down and cast out these forces of evil. And yet he never anywhere makes the slightest allusion to it. He does not seem to have known anything about it. If he did, he did not consider it a matter of any importance, or, at any rate, did not consider it worth while that we should know about it. On this point he is utterly silent. Indeed, does it not seem to you a little significant and strange, if he had lived in heaven for uncounted ages before he appeared here, that he never says anything about what kind of a place it was? Even in the most intimate conversations with his disciples he does not allude to it. The silence seems to me very significant.

Another point concerning which he is equally reticent:

he does not say a word about the Garden of Eden, the creation of Adam and Eve, the temptation, or the fall. And yet, according to the popular doctrine, he came here on purpose to deliver us from the results of these; but he says nothing about them. I do not say that he did not believe this teaching: I simply say it is strange he has nowhere made any mention of it.

Another point: Paul teaches, you know, with such force that he makes it the pivot on which his whole scheme of salvation turns, that death came into the world as the result of Adam's sin. Jesus says nothing whatever about the origin of death. He takes it for granted, of course; but he does not teach that it was the result of sin. He is utterly silent concerning the whole great, thrilling question. We may probably presume that he held this belief, because we know it was the popular belief of his time. But yet Jesus rose superior to the popular belief of his time in so many and in such marked directions that possibly we may find this to be only an illustration of that grand superiority which he so frequently manifested.

Now let us turn and look the other way for a moment. What does Jesus teach as to the place of abode of the departed spirits? He teaches definitely nothing at all. He does make allusions to it, and these seem to show that he held the popular belief. For example, on the cross, when the penitent thief confesses his sins and prays for mercy, he says to him, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise!" And Paradise, as we have seen, was one of the divisions of the underground world, the abode of departed spirits, the place where the good were permitted to go; while Gehenna was the place of the bad.

I think I have already intimated to you that the people held that these two places were very close together,— Paradise and Gehenna; and this appears to be the thought of Jesus in that famous parable of his concerning Dives and Lazarus. There, you will remember, Dives is in Gehenna,

in the place of torment, suffering, and longing for at least one drop of water to cool his tongue; and he looks and sees Lazarus in Paradise, across the gulf fixed between the two places.

In order to understand what it means for the blessed to be in the bosom of Abraham, you need to recall the attitude of those partaking of a feast in the olden time. They did not sit in chairs around a table, but reclined on couches, or one long couch, leaning on their left elbows near to the table, while their feet extended away from the table towards the other part of the room. You will see, in the light of this attitude, how easy it was for the penitent Magdalen to come and wash the feet of Jesus with her tears and wipe them with the hairs of her head while he was reclining, not sitting, at the table. The intimate friend of some one thus at the board would be next to him, just in front of him, able to turn and look into his face, and, as it were, lean upon his bosom. And this, of course, was the sign of the greatest favor that could be conferred upon one,— to be thus intimately related to a great or distinguished person on a festive occasion like this. Heaven is frequently described — or the abode of the blessed — under this figure of a feast, and those that are saved are spoken of as reclining in the bosom of Abraham. So Jesus represented Lazarus, the beggar, as at last lifted to this sublime felicity, and Dives, the rich man, so near to him that he can see,— so near that they can converse back and forth over the gulf of separation. This throws light upon the conception which Jesus held of the underworld, and shows that he shared the opinions of his time, or, at least, was willing to use those opinions for illustrating his truth when he gave utterance to this remarkable parable.

The only other phase that I need to note is one which will lead us significantly to a higher teaching on the part of Jesus than we have noted in regard to his disciples. Notice his conversation with those who were about him just before

the crucifixion, as it is recorded in the Gospel according to John. He says that he is going away, he is going to the Father; that he goes to prepare a place for them; and that, when he has prepared a place for them, he will come again and receive them to himself, that they may always be together. You see, he touches here a point which is often mooted in the theological discussions of the world, as to our recognizing friends who have preceded us into this other life. If we are to accept the teaching of Jesus as of authority, then those who have been intimately associated here will naturally gravitate together in that spiritual life and will renew the felicity and the sweetness of their old-time associations. He is coming to take his friends to the place he has prepared for them; and there they are ever to be together in the sweetness of a love untouched by pain, unshadowed by the possibility of another separation through death.

But now there is a very striking thing to be noted. In the midst of this conversation he says, "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." But Thomas said, "We know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?" Then what does he answer? He does not say that it is in the underworld; he does not say it is above the sky; he does not say it is off on some distant star in space; he does not point in any direction, east, west, north, or south. He simply says, "I am the way." Spiritually interpreted, meaning simply this spiritual, divine truth which he embodied, which he represented, and which he had been teaching,— this is the way to the eternal felicity, this is the way to the home of the blessed.

You see he is touching on mystical ground, he is coming to the utterance of a most profound and significant spiritual truth. For, in another place, when he is speaking of eternal life, he does not say it is living in a walled city, or in a beautiful palace, or in the midst of fadeless trees and luscious fruits. He says, "This is eternal life, to know thee,

the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." In other words, eternal life is a quality, in the teaching of Jesus. It is a matter of character, it is spiritual unfolding, it is insight, it is being,— not simply place nor surroundings.

I must touch on one subject for a moment, though giving no decisive opinion on it, because I hold none. The parable of Dives and Lazarus suggests inevitably the question as to whether Jesus believed not only in the immortal life, but in the immortal death,— whether he believed in eternal punishment, in other words. You know very well what a conflict of opinion there has been in regard to this matter. Jesus uses words which can very easily be interpreted in favor of endless punishment, or, at least, words that can be so interpreted are attributed to him. But we must remember two or three things.

In the first place, we are never quite certain as to whether these opinions may not have been colored by the belief of the age when the Gospels took their present shape. Then we must remember that Jesus was an Oriental: he spoke in figure, he used poetical expressions; and the tendency of the Protestant theologian is to harden these flowers and figures of speech down into cold, hard, literal prose. Let me suggest to you this matter by recurring to the words of Mozoomdar, the famous East Indian seer, when he was in this country two years ago. "Jesus," he said, "was an Oriental; and we Orientals understand him. He spoke in figure. We understand him. He was a mystic. You take him literally: you make an Englishman of him." This was his judgment as to the way we are apt to interpret the sayings of Jesus. We must remember that, then. And how much of this is simply striking poetical figure of speech, and how much is literal verity, it is very difficult for us at present to say.

And then we must remember that Jesus, a great many times, was talking of the end of the age, the great transition that was believed to be imminent at the time of the coming

of the Messiah, and not to the final condition of things when the heavens and the earth should have passed away.

It seemed to me necessary to recur to this point for a moment; but I am inclined to believe that Jesus held such a doctrine of the infinite love of the Father as would preclude the possibility of holding to that which seems to us the inevitable and eternal contradiction of that love. And let me say again, as a matter of perfect honesty, that, if the doctrine of eternal punishment was clearly and unmistakably taught on every leaf of the Bible and on every leaf of all the Bibles of all the world, I would not believe a word of it. I would appeal from these misconceptions of even the seers and the great men to the infinite and eternal Good, who only is God, and who only on such terms could be worshipped.

I must refer now to that which is in some ways the very central teaching of Jesus; and you will see that, though it appears to be going away from our theme for a moment, it is coming back to the very heart of it. The one thing that Jesus preached and taught first and foremost, in the presence of which everything else was subsidiary, was his doctrine of the kingdom of God. His first word is, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." And this doctrine of the kingdom he preaches first, last, and all the time. It was to set up this kingdom that he tells us he came.

It is very curious to note what a strange transformation the teaching of Jesus has undergone at the hands of those who have claimed to be his interpreters. The kingdom of God in the modern world, the perfect kingdom of God, is the few people who belong to the particular church of the one who happens to be writing about it, or those churches who are in general sympathy with it; while the final, complete salvation which Jesus had in mind when he spoke of the kingdom of God and its citizens has been postponed to another world. We look for a perfect condition of things only after death. Jesus looked for it here. There is no

slightest reason whatever for supposing that Jesus expected the perfect kingdom of heaven, of which he talked, to be established anywhere else except on this poor old earth of ours. That judgment scene of his, where he represents the conditions of entering into that kingdom, is worthy of our notice. What does he say about the conditions?

Now I am not going to say a word against church or Bible, ritual, service,— any of these things. But I wish you to see carefully this: when Jesus is discussing the terms of admission to his perfect kingdom, he does not say a word about belonging to a church, does not refer to it. He does not say a word about your belief, whether you have any creed, or whether, if you have, it is correct. No reference to it. He does not say anything about a sacrament. He does not refer to the Bible, to reading it or neglecting it; not a hint as to prayer,— absolutely not one word concerning any of those things which are ordinarily set off by themselves and classed as religious duties. The only condition of admittance to his kingdom of heaven, which he has come to set up, is simple human goodness,— not the slightest hint of anything else.

And where is this kingdom to be established? Right here. He says, The kingdom of heaven cometh not by observation. If they say, Lo here, or Lo there, pay no attention to them; for the kingdom of God is within you, or, as it may equally well be translated,— and note that it does not essentially change its meaning,— is among you. That is, the kingdom of God is right here already, it is begun, it is in any true and noble heart.

This chimes in with the doctrine of his conversation with the woman of Samaria. He says, It is not in this mountain, Gerizim, where you worship, it is not in Jerusalem, it is not any particular place in the world where shrines are set up and special rites celebrated, where you can find God. "God is Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in

spirit and in truth." And his kingdom is wherever a single heart loves and worships in spirit and in truth. It is right here in this world.

And now note one more point. When is the change coming that is to set up this kingdom? For, contradictory as it may seem, if the reports of Jesus are accurately made, he teaches that this kingdom is not a matter of slow growth, spreading from one heart to another as goodness naturally grows, by contagion, but it is to be set up by divine intervention at his own second coming, at a time when all nature is to be convulsed, the stars are to fall from heaven, everything is to be shaken. Then the trumpet is to sound; and he, accompanied by his legions of angels, is to appear in the sky, and the old is to pass away and the new is to be established. He says definitely that "This generation shall not pass away until all these things be fulfilled."

I have very serious doubt myself as to whether Jesus did say it. We know this to have been the popular belief of his time; and, very likely, this popular belief gets into the reported saying, when he himself did not use the precise language that is here imputed to him. But, at any rate, we know that he did teach the immediate coming of this kingdom, that it was to be established here on earth, and that the simple, human, lovable good were to be its citizens.

Now, at the end, I have two or three points which I wish to make, which I believe to be only fair and just and true, as pointing to the very heart and significance of the teaching of Jesus. I have already touched on the matter; but I wish to emphasize it by setting it apart as a point by itself. Jesus teaches that the eternal life is a matter of quality, of character, and that there are people all around us now living the eternal life; that it is not a question simply of duration. If we are to take these words of Jesus with the full power of their meaning, a man might keep on living forever and never know anything about the eternal life; as, for example, you can conceive of an animal, a horse, or a dog, as living

on indefinitely, but as knowing nothing of any high human life.

This eternal life is of a higher grade, a finer quality, than the ordinary life of men and women. And what is the essence of it? It is that the person comes to live in those things which are eternal, which are deathless in their very nature, which are divine, partaking of the divine quality. Paul says that knowledge, for example, can pass away. In other words, if I live, I may be perfect in my knowledge of the geography of this planet; but, suppose I move to another planet, that is of no more value to me. So a large part of the knowledge over which we labor may be of a great deal of importance to us to-day, and yet not permanent in its nature. But Paul says that faith and hope and love abide. These are the things that last. All those divine qualities and characteristics that make us like God,— these are the things that are imperishable, that endure forever and ever. And the man that comes up to the high level of this kind of life, and tastes these things, is tasting to-day the eternal life.

Thus it is in accord, I think, with the deepest teaching of Jesus that we should remember how shallow and false our conception of a future life is. There is no such thing as a "future" life in the sense of which we talk about it. There is no past except in our memory. There is no to-morrow except in our anticipation. The whole universe lives this instant, and only this instant. We are in the immortal life now. If we are naturally immortal, death will make no change in us: it is a mere incident in our career.

So Jesus teaches, I think, that the eternal life, being a quality of character, exists to-day. It is not something to be waited for. Our friends, for example, if they are alive anywhere, are alive at all, are alive this minute. They are not alive in the future somewhere any more than a friend who has gone to Europe is living in a future life.

Do not let us be deluded by the superficial meaning of

words. We are the children of God. We are immortal this moment; and, though here on this planet, and encased in these bodies, we are living the immortal life. Let us rise to the level, then, of what Jesus means by the eternal life, and be worthy of it.

And there is another thing, at the close, which we seem to suppose (those of us who believe in it at all) to have been peculiar to the dispensation of two thousand years ago. This every-day, commonplace world of hopes and fears, meetings and partings, joys and sorrows,— this world, according to the gospel story, is encased in a world of spirit, immersed in it, surrounded by it as by an atmosphere. I am not now saying I believe this, I am not saying you believe it. I say it is the gospel conception.

Note, before Jesus comes into this world at all, messengers from the Unseen appear, and report that he is coming. He is guarded in his childhood, he is watched over all the way along. When he appears at the Jordan for baptism, out of the closely enfolding invisible comes the appearance of a dove, figuring forth the Spirit; and a voice is heard saying, "This is my beloved Son." He gets weary: messengers out of the Unseen appear and minister to him. And so all the way along,— appearances, visions, voices. His disciples go one day with him up on a mountain top, and suddenly they see him surrounded by a glory that they have never noticed before; and, as they gaze, two forms that they recognize after as being Moses and Elijah, appear, and talk with him. They disappear again, the vision vanishes. After his resurrection some of his disciples are walking along a road towards Emmaus; and he suddenly appears, and talks to them. Then he reveals himself to them in breaking of bread, and disappears again. On another occasion he appears suddenly to his disciples while they are behind closed doors in an upper room, and then fades away out of their sight. Then, after he has finally disappeared into the invisible, two shining ones are present

to the disciples as they watch his departure, and tell them that it will not be a great while before they see his return out of the invisible again.

The point I wish you to notice is that, according to the conception of the Gospels, the fundamental Christian conception of the other world is that it is close by, all around us; and the life of Jesus is full of visions, of voices, appearances, manifestations, warnings, helpings, guidings, from this other life, in which, as I said, the universe seems to be immersed.

So the real life, according to the teaching of Jesus, is this spirit life, this life for which we are now in training, this life which deals with the high and fine and sweet and pure, this life that is one of love, of service, of self-forgetfulness, of consecration to others; and the things that people care the most about, are apt to care the most for, are perishable, and pass away with the using. The eternal life, according to Jesus, is the only true human life, the one to which we ought to consecrate ourselves here and now.

Our Father, if we are Thy children, let us live as Thy children; and let there be in our hearts an echo to the great truths which whisper to us out of the Spirit, and which lead and lure us ever towards higher and finer things. Amen.

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"Some great cause, God's new Messiah"

MESSIAH PULPIT

NEW YORK

(Being a continuation of *Unity Pulpit*, Boston)

SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

VOL. III. MARCH 17, 1899. No. 24.

SERIES ON

BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

VI. The Other World of the Middle Ages

GEO. H. ELLIS
272 CONGRESS STREET, BOSTON
104 E. 20TH STREET, NEW YORK
1899

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THE OTHER WORLD OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

I TAKE as a text — I confess to you more as a formality, because a text is expected, than because it has any peculiar fitness to the theme — from the first Epistle to the Churches in Corinth, the second chapter, the ninth verse,—"Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him."

If we could wake up for a little time in the Middle Ages, — say the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, or thirteenth century,— I fear we should not find it a pleasant time in which to be alive. The world was a scene of political disorder, contentions on every hand. But, worse than that, it was brooded over by supernatural fears,— fears wide and dark-winged, that shadowed the lives and shut out the sunshine from the souls of men. God was away off in the empyrean, never seen, rarely felt to be nigh to men. He was to be approached only through a series of mediators. First, indeed, the Church had taught that his Son, the second person in the Trinity, had come to reveal him. But it was hundreds of years since the Son was here; and he had withdrawn into the heavens, and was now seated at the right hand of God. And, when next he came, it was not to be chiefly on an errand of mercy, but as the severe Judge of all the earth.

The human heart, feeling the need of something tender and human in the divinity, had transformed Mary from being merely a peasant woman of Nazareth into the mother of God. And they felt that they could appeal to her tenderness and love; and they could hope that she would inter-

cede with the Son, who would intercede with the Father, who might come to care for them.

And then, as Mary sometimes was far away, as she grew and was exalted into dignity that was attached to her as the mother of God, they drew nigh to certain saints,— men who had been distinguished for charity and kindliness and love when on earth, and who had been set apart as specially holy and helpful since they had entered into the Unseen. And so, as I say, God was a good ways off, only to be approached through saints, through the Virgin, through Jesus.

But, while God was at a distance, the devils were very, very near. The air about the earth was supposed to be full of these evil, tempting spirits. They caused shipwreck at sea and sudden death on land; they blighted the crops; they smote and blasted in the tempests; they took possession of the bodies and the souls of men. They were ever ready — as in the case of Faust — to enter into a compact with a man, bestowing upon him whatever earthly blessing he might desire, and, in lieu of that, taking a mortgage on his soul.

The devils, then, were very near; and God was very far off.

The two worlds interpenetrated each other, but more frequently, perhaps, for evil than for good. Not always for evil, for sometimes the Virgin Mary was seen, at least in a vision, sometimes the angels manifested themselves for human help; but the two worlds, as I said, interpenetrated each other. And this, note, all the way along from the beginning of human history. In every religion there has been possible communion between the seen and the unseen.

In order now that we may comprehend the kind of world that the people lived in during the Middle Ages, and that you may see how natural it was that the ideas I have already spoken of were popularly held, I need to picture to you in outline the universe as it was believed in during

these centuries. And I take for my purpose the world of Dante. I do this merely because Dante has given it to us in clear-cut outline more plainly than we find it in most other writings. I do it because, not only has Dante given us the figure of the external universe as it was believed in by the scholars of his time, but he has summed up the philosophy, the theology, all the wisdom of the Middle Ages,— in this, his marvellous poem,— as you can find them nowhere else. I take him, then, as a type, and for the purposes of illustration.

The theory of the universe held at that time, and thus outlined by Dante, was, as you well know, what has been called the Ptolemaic theory, that one which has been displaced during the last four hundred years by the Copernican. That you may locate the time a little more definitely, I will remind you of the fact that Dante was born some time during the year 1265, and that he died in the early part of the fourteenth century.

Now for the world of Dante. The earth was a sphere, a globe,— at the centre. It was the centre of gravity of the universe,— the one spot, and the only spot in the universe, that was at rest. It was land on one of its hemispheres and water on the other. Now around this earth were the different crystal concentric spheres. We speak now of the spheres, of the music of the spheres; but the old meaning has been completely discharged from those phrases, and it is hard for us, even imaginatively, to appreciate what was the belief of that time.

You are to think of nine or ten concentric crystallized spheres, as real as a nest of glass globes inside of each other. There was first the sphere of the Moon, as the body nearest to the earth. Then the sphere of Mercury, then of Venus. Then the sun, regarded at that time as a planet. Then Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. These were the seven planets known; and each of these was supposed to be attached to one of these crystal globes, or spheres, and these turned

round the earth, and carried these planets with them in their motions. And it was in this way that the Ptolemaic astronomers explained the movements of the heavenly bodies.

Outside of these came next another sphere, in which were all the fixed stars in one plane. Then beyond that was what was called the Primum mobile, the first one of the spheres that moved. Then beyond that was the Empyrean, unmoved, beyond space, beyond time, in eternity.

Above the Empyrean were nine other circles, or spheres, representing the angelic hierarchy. There were nine orders of angels. There were first the Seraphim, the Cherubim, the Throne,— three. Then were the Dominations, the Virtues, the Powers,— three others. Then the Principalities, Archangels, Angels. Three times three great circuits or rings, in which abode the angels according to their rank and order.

The Seraphim, in the smaller circle, were nearest the centre of life and power in the universe where God was at the same time manifested and hidden in his ineffable glory. Then these spheres radiated farther and farther from God, and came nearer and nearer to the world. And Dante tells us that the angels and the spheres that made up the universe as it was believed in at his day were created at the same time. And the reason for it is this: the angels in their rank moved — receiving their power from God, and their motion and life from him, in their order — and controlled the different spheres that made up the world. That is, the Seraphim moved the highest sphere, the outermost one, that of Saturn; the Cherubim moved the next one within, that of Jupiter; and so on in their order clear down. And Dante tells us that they must have been created at the same time, because, if the worlds had been made without the angels, there would have been nothing to move the worlds; and, if the angels had been created without the spheres of the world, there would have been nothing for them to do; so their creation was coincident in time.

Here, then, you get, if I have made it clear and you have followed me, an outline of the kind of universe that people supposed they lived in during the Middle Ages. But now we come to a tremendous change.

As you see, there were just these spheres of the different planets, and these rings or circles in which dwelt the angels with God at the centre. But what is the result when the angels are created, according to Dante? It was just twenty seconds, as Dante tells us, after the angels were created, when Lucifer rebelled, leading a third part of the angels with him; and they were cast out into the abyss. Only twenty seconds; and the cause of the rebellion was different from that which Milton gives us at a later time. It was not ambition: according to Dante, it was impatience to know everything all at once, and because God did not confer upon him perfect knowledge soon enough, that he rebelled against his authority, and was cast out.

Now there came a great change in the earth, caused by the fall of the angels. When Satan, the great leader, fell, he struck the earth at a point which later became the precise place where the temple in Jerusalem was located. The earth, in horror and fear, fled at his approach; and so, as he fell, it shrunk away from him, and created a tunnel reaching from the surface of the earth down to precisely the centre, the centre of gravity. And here, because it was the centre of gravity, Satan stuck fast, and has been imprisoned there in eternal ice from that day to this. Satan, then, poised just at the centre of gravity of the world; and so much of the earth as had filled up this tunnel and had fled at his approach, sunk through the planet, and emerged as an enormous mountain on the other side, the only land in all the western hemisphere. And at the summit of this mountain, which became the Mount of Purgatory, was located the earthly Paradise.

When Adam and Eve were created, they were placed here in the Garden of Eden on the summit of this mountain.

But how long before they fell? A little longer than the angels. The angels, as I told you, kept their first estate only twenty seconds. Adam and Eve maintained their innocence seven hours; and that was all. When I read the story in the Old Testament, and see that Adam was put to sleep and Eve created, and that he named all the animals and did a good many other remarkable things, it impresses me that that must have been rather a busy seven hours for him. But in seven hours he was cast out of the Garden of Eden.

Dante does not explain it; but it becomes a problem as to how, since the Garden of Eden was located on the top of a lofty mountain in the midst of a hemisphere of water on the opposite side of the globe, the human race is found to have its original home on the eastern hemisphere, in Asia. So one tradition has it that the human race lived there on what came to be the Purgatorial Mountain until after the flood, and that, when the ark took Noah and his family away from this mountain, it floated around the world, and at last landed them on Mount Ararat in Asia; and so the original location of paradise became lost to the world.

This is the kind of world, then, that we find was believed in during the Middle Ages.

Now I wish to take you on a little tour with me. I shall make it as short as I can and have it comprehensible to you, because a part of the journey, at any rate, will not be at all a pleasant one.

Dante goes to hell, climbs the Mount of Purgatory, and is admitted even into the angelic spheres and among the blessed who are enjoying the Beatific Vision. In other words, he makes a pilgrimage throughout the known universe of his time. And after his great poem was written it is said that the women and the children would point fearsome fingers at him as they saw him with his eternally sad face and bowed head going through the streets, and say, "There is the man whose beard was singed on his journey

through hell,"—so real did this journey seem to the imaginations of the people of the time.

This poem of Dante's is one of the half-dozen greatest poems of all the world. In it he sums up the philosophy, the theology, the science,— all the wisdom of his time. But it is so interfused with Dante's magnificent qualities of soul, it is so touched by his feelings of pity for human sorrow, it is so dreadful in its pictorial representation of the results of human sin, that it can never be forgotten or cease to be one of the treasures of the world.

Let us accompany Dante briefly in his journey through hell and up the Mount of Purgatory. He finds himself, he says, lost in a thick wood. Three wild beasts meet him,— the allegorical significance of which we need not trouble ourselves about now,— and he is about to turn back in fear when he sees Virgil,— Virgil who, in the popular imagination of the people in the Middle Ages, was made a magus, a genie, and a wonder-worker of every kind, whom Dante regards as perhaps the greatest poet of all antiquity and had recognized as his master. And Virgil tells him that Beatrice, the one that he loved so passionately in his youth, who had died, and whom now he worshipped as an emblem and symbol of divine philosophy, had sent him to take him on this journey through the other world, that he might learn its lessons and teach them to his people.

So, as they go on, they come at last to that gate which the world will never forget, over which is the inscription, "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." Dante declares — and he tried to believe it — that it was written that both Love and Wisdom were engaged in building this prison; but the part of the inscription which no one ever overlooks is that which I have quoted.

They find themselves in the first circle of hell, I was going to say. In one sense, it is true; but it was a sort of ante-hell,— an outermost circle, an entrance-way, a porch, — not hell as a place of torment yet. And here whom do

they find, before they have really entered the place of excruciating anguish? Dante finds this is the abode of Virgil himself, his loved and revered master. And he finds here Socrates, finds here all the great, the noble, the good, the famous, of the ancient world,— not one of them with any chance of salvation. And yet Dante could not quite put them into a place of positive torment. They suffer simply with a deathless though hopeless longing,— longing for God, longing for light, longing for peace. And they were never to be attained. For Dante teaches us that, no matter how good, no matter how true, no matter how noble a man may have been, there is no possibility of salvation for him unless he foresaw Christ, and believed in him, or else looked back to Christ, and believed in him, and was baptized.

Here also is an innumerable company of innocent, prattling babes that can never enter heaven. Why?

We are taught that before circumcision was heard of, if a parent had wonderful faith in God and did the best he could, his child might be saved. After circumcision was revealed to the Jews, no babe in all the world could possibly be saved unless it had been circumcised. And, after baptism had been given, no babe in all the world had any hope unless it had been baptized. So here in the ante-hell were all the good of the antique world and the millions on millions of blessed babes with no hope for any of them in the theology of that time.

Then the fearful descent begins. I need not tell you — you know — how circle after circle, as they went down lower and lower, the quality of the sin is supposed to be increased and the excess of the torment to be intensified. Tortures horrible, unspeakable, almost unreadable, fill the description of the mediæval hell, until we come, as I said, to the bottom. There is Satan, so large, Dante says, that one of his arms was as much larger than a giant as a giant was larger than he. He has three faces; and Judas Iscariot is

being mangled in one of his mouths, and Brutus and Cassius each in one of the others. This peculiar punishment for Brutus and Cassius grows out of Dante's political philosophy, which I have not time to detain you with this morning. He had what he thought was a sufficient reason for placing them there.

Then begins a new experience to this pilgrim in the other world. He starts, as he supposes, to climb down the thighs of Satan, but suddenly finds himself going up. He does not understand what it means until Virgil explains that he has passed the centre of gravity, and is ascending towards the other surface of the world.

They find four rivers in hell, caused by the tears of anguish and suffering and sorrow and shame that have afflicted the world. They follow up the bed, or the channel, worn by another river; and this one flows, they find, from purgatory, and is caused by the tears of penitence of those that are ascending its mount. They come to the shores of the island from which this mountain rises, and there begin the ascent. Here there are seven circles, corresponding to the seven cardinal sins as taught by the Catholic Church. When they reach the Garden of Eden, or the earthly paradise on the summit, Virgil suddenly disappears. He can go no further; and Beatrice, who has come down from her angelic circle, meets him, and becomes his guide through the celestial spheres.

These spheres of the angels,— in every one the position which the saved souls occupy corresponds again to Dante's idea of divine justice. Those who had been most worthy, deserved most, who were most distinguished for piety, of course are placed in the highest circles and the nearest to God. At the very centre — the light reflected in a wondrous lake — is the glory that hides the Triune God. Sometimes the blessed that are so close to him are permitted a glimpse of that ineffable radiance which would blind those who are not prepared for the vision.

Here now is Dante's universe. It is on a pilgrimage like this that he travelled through hell, up the Mount of Purgatory, and into the heavens.

Now I wish to note certain characteristics of it which seem to me important that we should touch upon, and the lessons which we should learn therefrom. When Dante sees these souls in hell, they are embodied, after a fashion. They looked to him just as they did when he used to meet them on the streets of Florence. And yet they do not need to eat or drink: their bodies are not like the fleshly bodies they had in this world; and at the same time they are capable of suffering no end of anguish,— hunger, thirst, from cold, from heat, from stinging winds,— in all sorts of ways. Only, mind you, this hell is not quite complete, and heaven is not quite complete, until after the resurrection of the body and the final judgment, because a man is not supposed to be able to suffer everything of which he is capable until he is a whole man, body and soul together; and he is not supposed to be capable of enjoying all that is best until he is a whole man after the same fashion.

I want you to note here something that seems to me pathetic. I have studied all the old religions of the world; but Christianity is distinguished from all others — and it is a lamentable distinction, to my view — as being the first religion on the face of the earth that ever taught immortal, hopeless anguish. The other religions have their hells,— infinitely horrible, tortures such as we cannot conceive of; but they always think of time as made up of cycles, and those cycles come to an end. So the hells end some time, all but the Christian hell. There is no other hell that I know of that does not come to an end.

And this, as I said a moment ago, includes all the noblest of the heathen as well as the worst of them, and includes all the unbaptized children that have ever been born and have died.

There is a characteristic now of purgatory that I wish to

speak of; and, to lead to it, let me say this: I presume my experience in trying to read Dante is very much like that of the experience of the average man. I have loved poetry from the time I was able to read at all. I read all the old English poets,— finding them in our little town library,— read them over and over before I had the slightest idea as to their relative rank and importance. I say this merely to show that what I have to say now does not spring out of the fact that I have no love for poetry. I have always loved it more than almost anything else in literature.

When I began to read Dante, I found his Hell interesting. It was terribly interesting; but it was real, it was human. You had seen the people, you had heard them talk. I read Purgatory with a good deal less interest and with much more difficulty. It did not seem half as human to me: there was an air of artificiality about it. Do you know I believe in purgatory, not as a place, but as a condition of experience both in this world and in the next. But I believe that people are to work out their salvation, deliverance from their wickedness and their sins, through genuine practice of goodness in the helping of others, not in gymnastic exercises that have no unselfish purpose beyond themselves. Now purgatory is simply a moral gymnasium in Dante. You go through a lot of tortures; but it does not help anybody else, does not make the world any better, and does not do any good except to provide so much torture for so many sins while you were in the world below; so that purgatory always seemed to me unreal, unnatural.

And then there is another defect about it. The Catholic Church, I have no doubt, meant it well; but, for example, if a man was saved at last,— that is, if he got a chance to go to purgatory, which always meant a chance to get out of it and go to paradise and be among the saved,— if he postponed his repentance until the last day of his life, he would be delayed in the ante-purgatory which preceded the purgatory proper for thirty years for every single year of his post-

ponement in the matter of repentance. But the prayers of his friends and of those that loved him could expedite that journey and shorten the time. And so here you find all the prayers and the masses of the Catholic Church from the beginning for the deliverance of men from purgatory; and it has been, perhaps, the grandest of all the Catholic Church's sources of revenue. This is a serious criticism on the purgatory of the Church.

I said I read Hell with a great deal of interest. I read Purgatory with less interest; and heaven was the most uninteresting place I ever visited. I found it exceedingly difficult to read the Paradiso at all. I did. I worked hard at it; but it was not interesting to me then, and never has been interesting to me since. And none of the heavens that orthodox Christendom has offered to us has ever been interesting to me. In Dante's universe the only reason I can imagine for any one's ever wanting to get to heaven is for the sake of getting out of the other place. I do not know why anybody should want to be there for any other reason. There is nothing for him to do: there is nothing human for him to be engaged in.

Now let us review some of the other religions, and see how much more natural they are in this respect. Go back to the traditional spirit world of the Indians. When the Indian got to his happy hunting grounds, they were happy. He had his dogs and horses, his bows and arrows, and was able to do something that he liked to do. Then take the Walhalla of the Norseman,— not, perhaps, a very elevating life, that of being engaged in mortal combat with one another; but it was something to appeal to and thrill the rough bravery of the Norsemen. So you take any of the other religions of the world with which I am acquainted, and there is something to go to heaven for, something to do after you get there; but the old heaven that I used to hear pictured as a boy, the heaven described as a place where we were to play on harps and listen to celestial music forever,

was not an attractive place to me. I remember when I used to hear the hymn sung, one verse of which closed with

> "Where congregations ne'er break up,
> And Sabbaths never end,"

I used to think I would almost rather go anywhere else than there.

And so, when we come to Dante's heaven, they discuss scholastic philosophy, fine points of theology; and they gain now and then glimpses of what Dante tells us causes inexpressible bliss,— the Beatific Vision. But it means nothing to us. I cannot understand what is meant by the Beatific Vision or why it should cause us exquisite delight; therefore, Dante's heaven has no meaning, and so no attraction for me. To have any attraction for me, heaven must be a place of growth, of progress. One must be able there to find scope and room for the exercise of every grand and fine faculty of human nature.

One question Dante asks there,— and with this I must close,— and he gets no answer. I have told you that Dante seemed to be troubled because the great and noble of the ancient world must stay forever in hell; but it was church doctrine, and Dante was orthodox. He did not dare to contradict the teachings of his Church. He asks one of the old philosophers and wise men of the Church why it is. The only answer he gets is the one that Paul offers to the man who asks questions,—"Who art thou that repliest against God?" He gets no explanation; and Dante shows that he comes away with an aching heart, because he, the Florentine, was infinitely better than his God.

For this doctrine of everlasting punishment is blasphemy against God, is an outrage on every sentiment of justice, is a ghastly denial of the divine love; and it has been the cause of more wars, of more hatred, of more bloodshed, on this poor old earth of ours than any other one thing conceivable. It has been because men have said, "If these

people hold and cherish such ideas, they will go to hell, and they will take thousands and millions of other people to hell with them; and so we must stop it at any cost." This has been the reason why thinking and daring have been accounted crime. The Bloody Mary of England reasoned logically when she said, "It is fit that I should burn these heretics here, whom my God is to burn in the other world forever and ever." Why should she be any better than her God? And, if it were true, then the suppression of heresy at any cost was mercy. So was never a rack or a thumb-screw, there has never been an auto-da-fé, there has never been any of the horrors of the Inquisition, there has never been any murders like those of the Waldenses, never a fire at Smithfield, never a persecution from the date of the birth of the gentle Jesus until now,— when we are getting back the gentle Jesus again,— that has not been caused by this infernal doctrine of divine hate.

Let us, then, be thankful for the changes of human thought that have given us a better heaven than that of Dante and that have blotted out forever the hideousness of his hell.

Father, Thy love, Thy tenderness, Thy care, we recognize and rejoice in. We are glad we are in Thy hands, and not in those of any Church, not in those of any theologian,— that we are in the hands of the loving and the just Father forevermore. Amen.

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VII. Protestant Belief concerning Death and the Life beyond

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PROTESTANT BELIEF CONCERNING DEATH AND THE LIFE BEYOND.

I TAKE as a text the first verse from the twenty-first chapter of the book of Revelation,— "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

We do not know who may have been the author of this book of Revelation. Traditionally, it has been assigned to John, the favorite among the apostles. The best scholarship of the age, however, is inclined to think that originally it was a Jewish treatise, antedating the birth of Christ, and that afterwards it was worked over by some Christian hand and brought into its present shape. This is the belief, I say, of the best scholarship of the age. I have made no such careful study of it myself as to be able — even if it were required — to tell you what parts of it are Jewish and what parts Christian. I wish simply to say that the writer, whoever he may have been, marks in his statements a transition time between the old thought of the heavens and the earth and the new. He declares the first heaven and the first earth to have passed away, and says that he sees — doubtless in vision, looking down the future — new heavens and a new earth. In this new heaven and new earth there is to be no more sea.

Let me say, in passing, that friendship and love for the sea are comparatively modern. In nearly all the classic literature of the world you find it referred to as a barren and desolate waste. It was also looked on as a barrier between peoples, so standing in the way of human inter-

knowledge and human brotherhood. This, however, only by the way.

The seer saw a time when the old heaven and the old earth would pass away and all things become new. We are this morning to consider a part at least of this transition epoch, and note to what a remarkable extent and in what ways the old heavens and the old earth are gone, and new heavens and new earths have taken their places.

Partly by way of comparison and partly for the sake of making this transition statement gentle and easy, it seems to me worth our while this morning to consider for a little the universe of Milton, the other great epic poet who has made us so at home in imaginative other worlds.

I told you that Dante's theory of the universe was that of Ptolemy. I tell you substantially the same concerning Milton's; and yet Milton modifies in some very important particulars the thought of Dante, as we shall see as we go on. Milton stands in a peculiar relation to the universe of Ptolemy and the new theory of Copernicus. Copernicus was born before Milton, and published his book long before Milton's death. Milton was perfectly familiar with Copernicus's new speculation. He had probably seen Galileo in Italy, the man who had done so much to establish the Copernican theory in the popular imagination. And yet at that time, the time of Milton, the whole Copernican universe was looked upon by the people very much as Darwinism is looked upon to-day. Scholars, those who understood Copernicus and were able to comprehend his reasonings and his proofs, had no sort of doubt of its truth.

So those to-day who have studied and who comprehend Darwin, and are able to estimate his reasonings and his proofs, have no sort of question about the essential truth of Darwinism. But there are people to-day by the thousand who have not done Mr. Darwin the honor to comprehend him, and so do not accept his teaching. So there were thousands in the time of Milton who, not having done Coper-

nicus the honor to comprehend him, did not accept his teaching. They still clung to the old Ptolemaic theory of the universe; and Milton clings to it, at least so far as his poetical purpose is concerned. We are not sure, we have no way of knowing, whether Milton really accepted the theory of Copernicus or not. He does not tell us; but he recognizes it as a speculation in his verse. He makes Adam talk with one of the angels concerning this new theory. But it is very curious. The same old note that rings from the beginning all up the ages is struck: the angel advises Adam not to pry too curiously into these matters; to be modest and accept the teachings of the Church and look after the welfare of his soul, and leave these things to the constituted authorities. That is the advice that has been given to man from the beginning; and, thank God, it is the advice that man has never taken.

Milton then accepted the Ptolemaic theory as the framework of his great epic; and, in order that you may compare it with that of Dante,— I ask pardon of those who are perfectly familiar with it,— let me outline a few of its main features.

Of course there was no purgatory in Milton's universe, because purgatory was a Catholic doctrine which the Protestants rejected. There was only a place for earth and heaven and hell. Imagine me drawing here in your presence a large circle; within that circle would be contained the entire Miltonic universe. Let me now draw a line across the centre, like an equator on a map of a hemisphere; and all above that equatorial line would be the empyrean, or heaven, the abode of God and the angels, and afterwards of the saved. Below that was chaos. After the war in heaven, and the angels were cast out, they fell through this chaos; and, to give you an idea of the size of Milton's universe, it took them just nine days and nights to fall from the empyrean to the bottom. They fell down to the bottom of this circle; and, after that, a dome was suddenly created

formed like the antarctic circle on a hemispherical map. Beneath this antarctic circle was hell. The rest of the space beneath the empyrean was chaos.

Then God determined to create the world and man. And remember that in those days the word "world" was not identical with the word "earth." The world included all the physical universe, the planets and stars. God then created the world. And, in order to represent the size of the world, imagine a small circle, the top of which would just touch the floor of the empyrean, and the bottom of which would reach half-way down to the antarctic circle, the top, or roof, of hell. Within this ring there were the nine concentric crystalline spheres that you remember were described in Dante's universe,— the spheres of the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, and so on. This was the Miltonic universe.

Clear at the bottom of this great circle was hell, the prison-house of the lost, below what might be called, for clear description, the antarctic circle; the earth, and the planets between this and the equator. And from the time of the resurrection of Christ,— the first one to enter heaven, — the saints went straight up to the empyrean, and the sinners went straight down to hell.

I said that Milton lived and wrote his poem in this transition time; and it was not long after his poem was published before the whole Ptolemaic universe, as Dante and Milton both conceived it, passed away from the belief even of the common people, though certain ideas and phrases connected with that Ptolemaic universe still survive even to the present time. We familiarly say that the sun and moon rise and set, though we know they do nothing of the kind. This merely to suggest to you that there are large numbers of phrases connected with the Ptolemaic universe that are in common use to-day. We have changed the meaning. We understand that they are not to be taken literally; and yet we continue to use them.

It was a process of hundreds of years, the passing away of the Ptolemaic universe from the common beliefs and thoughts of men and the taking the place of it of the Copernican universe in which we know we are living to-day. These spheres dissolved, melted away into infinite space, into measureless ether. We learned that there was no up and no down in the universe except as related to the particular planet on which the thinker or speaker might find himself at home. I remember when I was a little boy — and I dare to refer to my own personal feelings and thoughts because they are probably paralleled by the thoughts and feelings of so many other people — that I used to look up to the planets and stars by night, and think, How glorious, how brilliant it must be up there! I had not waked up to the consciousness of the thought that I was even then as much "up there" as the dweller on any possible sun or planet. You remember that beautiful verse of Thomas Hood,—

> "I remember, I remember
> The fir-trees dark and high;
> I used to think their slender tops
> Were close against the sky;
> It was a childish ignorance,
> But now 'tis little joy
> To know I'm farther off from heaven
> Than when I was a boy."

But Hood might well be comforted. He was not any farther off from heaven, and we are not any farther off from heaven: we are in heaven, even while on our commonly-called dull, sin-cursed planet; for the earth is a planet, glittering, shining in the eyes of the dwellers of any other of the heavenly bodies who may be near enough to see it.

We are in a new universe, then. The old earth and the old heavens have passed away. And, with the change of this philosophical and scientific theory of things, the theological world found itself confronted with the problem as to where

they should locate their hell and their heaven. We sometimes remember that the Catholic Church opposed science, that they had the thumb-screw and the Inquisition for people who asked questions; and it is perfectly true that the decay of the Latin races in Europe to-day had its root in religious prosecution, and there almost entirely. For ages, for generations, every man who dared to think had his head taken off or was tortured to death in some less easy way. Thinking, having a new idea, was a crime for generations. Under that kind of process how can you expect anything but national decay?

They were confronted, then, I say, with the problem of having somewhere to put their heaven and their hell. They opposed the new science — these Protestants — just as bitterly as did Rome. Old Protestant theologians charged Newton with atheism, when he discovered the law of gravity which accounted for the movements of the heavenly bodies. They said he was taking the stars and the planets out of the hands of God and putting them into the keeping of a law, and so he was atheistic. Ministers to-day ransack the Newtonian theories for illustrations of the magnificence of the power of the Almighty. Down to the time of Kepler, who discovered the great laws of planetary motion, there was no one wise enough to advance a theory to account for the movements of the planets any more rational than that on each one of them dwelt an angel whose business was to guide it through the sky, as Phaëthon drove his chariot across the classic heavens. This was the attitude of Protestants as well as Catholics.

Let us see now where they could put their hell and their heaven. For a long time the discovery of the rotundity of the earth, and the fact that it moved around the sun, did not disturb these theorizers in the least. They still located hell within the earth; and they found a vivid confirmation of the theory that the earth contained hell in the fact that, the deeper down they dug, the hotter it grew. And they

regarded Vesuvius, Ætna, and other mountains that belched forth smoke and flame as being only vent-holes of the pit. And one minister, an old theologian, more distinguished doubtless for his piety than for his sense of humor or his knowledge of physics, accounted for the revolution of the earth on its axis by the belief that the centre of the earth was the place where the souls of the damned were imprisoned, and that it was their struggling to climb out of the pit that acted precisely as the struggles of a squirrel on the wheel of his cage acts, and so produced the revolution of the earth on its axis. This is not very ancient; and doubtless he had a good many devoted followers, even as Brother Jackson, of Richmond, Va., has had in our day, who declares, in spite of all the astronomers have to say, that "the sun do move." Any man who vigorously asserts any of these ideas is sure to have a certain kind and class of followers.

By and by belief in the earth as the abode of the damned was given up; and some darker planet, supposed to exist somewhere in space, nobody knows where now,—they do not attempt to locate it any longer,— was chosen, where the souls of those who are in torment abide.

They found as much difficulty in locating heaven as they did hell. No longer could they say it was just above the dome of blue, for there is no dome of blue except as an optical effect; and, as I said, in the present universe there is no up and no down except as related to the centre and the circumference of the earth. That which is up at noon is down at midnight, and *vice versa*. So they could no longer look up, except morally, to the place where God and the angels and the saved were to be found. There has been a great deal of ingenious speculation on this question. Some theologians have supposed that the surface of our glorious sun was the place of abode of the blessed. Physically, I grant you, so far as we know, it may be possible. Others have looked for the central star in our galaxy, which is the

Milky Way. Others have sought still farther for some sun central to the entire physical universe and around which all things revolve. They have thought that that, and that only, was the appropriate place for the throne of the Almighty.

But we are faced by a lot of practically insuperable difficulties in these theories the moment we begin to reason. I told you not a great many Sundays ago how many years it would take a train of cars, if you could lay a track, to reach from the sun to the earth. If it had started in the time of Shakspere, it would still have a great many years to travel before it reached here. Even if the soul could travel with the speed of light, it would take eight minutes and a half to get to the sun; it would take three years and a half to get to our nearest neighbor beyond the sun; and there are suns so far away that we know it takes twenty, thirty thousand years for light to travel across the space. So, if we should accept any of these central suns that have been imagined as heaven, it would take the soul so long to get there, even if it travelled as fast as light, that the friends who started at the time of Adam would hardly now have gotten under way. In that case we should not be able to speak, if we take up with Mr. Talmage's theories on that subject, of having any friends at all in heaven: we might say that we have some who have started on the journey; and that is all.

You see, then, the difficulty that confronts one when he attempts to locate either hell or heaven in the astronomical universe that is known to us at the present time. There are other theories which seem to me more rational. I shall have occasion to deal with them later, and so do not dwell on them now,—for instance, that the souls of those who have inhabited this earth do not leave the vicinity of our earth at all, except as they wish to travel, but that the spirit world, good and bad, wraps round this old planet like an atmosphere. I shall speak of this further on some future Sunday morning.

Now I wish to raise another question as to who are the inhabitants of these hells and heavens according to the teachings of Protestant theology. I did not give you specimens of Catholic teaching last Sunday, because it seemed to me that they were too horrible even to read to you. This course of sermons, when it is done, will be in a book; and I shall make liberal quotations from these writers, and include them in the book as notes, so that, if you wish, you can read them for yourselves. The old Catholic Father, Tertullian, in a letter to his theological foes, pictures himself looking down upon the damned, they presumably among them, and cries out, "How I shall exult, how I shall laugh,"— when my time comes, and you are there! Thoughts even more horrible than these you may find in Protestant writers.

Who are they that are to dwell in hell, and how long are they to be there? First, all the heathen. There is no great Protestant creed in Christendom that finds any place for the salvation of the heathen any more than the Catholic creed,— not one. All the countless millions of them are doomed forever. And to let you have one little side glimpse, so that you may not think this antique, and that I am talking about ideas that are no longer held, let me give you a modern illustration. When I was living in Boston — and during the latter part of my life there; it occurred not long before I came here — there was a young man connected with one of the Congregational churches who wished to go as a missionary to Japan. He was examined as to his belief. He did not announce this as a positive opinion, it was simply a question with him,— he wanted to be permitted to think that perhaps, if a man had no possible chance in this world to hear about or accept Christ, he might have one chance at least to hear about him and accept him after death. He promised that he would not preach such a heresy as that. As an honest young man, he simply confessed that the question was lying in his mind and generating there a doubt as to

whether he might not be permitted thus to hold. And the board of commissioners, who had in charge the matter of deciding as to whether men should be permitted to go and preach to the heathen, would not appoint him; and he could not go.

That is modern enough; and the heresy would seem to be mild enough. None of the heathen, then, to be saved! And, oh, how many times as a boy, when once a month our weekly prayer-meeting was turned into what was called a missionary concert, have I heard people urged and urged and pleaded with with tears to give money to send missionaries, because countless millions of heathen were dropping ceaselessly into hell!

Who else? In the Episcopal Church, unbaptized infants; in the Presbyterian Church, non-elect infants; in the old-time New England Puritan Churches, non-elect infants. These are in hell as well as all the infants of all the heathen peoples of the world that have been born in all time. Do you think this is ancient? To be sure, it was preached in early New England. Let me suggest a picture. I beg your pardon for even mentioning it, because it is so horrible; but people ought to know that these things are still in the creeds. Jonathan Edwards pictures God as holding an infant over the burning pit until the flames scorch him, and that infant's turning at last like a viper and spitting its venom in his face. That is one of the pictures of Jonathan Edwards. Perfectly logical, if every child is born in sin and depraved, the difference between an infant and an adult being only the difference between a young rattlesnake and one fully developed with all its venom, that is all.

These, then, the great majority that have ever been born, are to be in hell; and, if I should dare to picture to you the kind of sufferings that have been described by ministers in their sermons, I should send you away with your hearts aching and your heads bewildered with the horror of it all.

It is to be how long? Forever, forever. I remember

myself — and these things come home, when one hears them — a minister, in trying to hint how long eternity would be, using this supposition: Suppose a bird were permitted to visit this planet from some other planet once in a thousand years, and carry off one grain of sand. At the end of a thousand years coming and getting another grain. When it had carried off the whole planet, eternity would not even have begun. This is Protestant teaching still. I tell you, friends, that there is not an authorized creed in Christendom that does not teach it still. Here are people, young ladies, young men, who would not kill a fly, who would not look on voluntarily and see a bug impaled by a naturalist and pinned in his museum,— who shrink from suffering like that,—who will join, and support with all their influence and their money, churches that are teaching these infamies against God, because they happen to like the embroidery of an altar cloth, or the music in the choir, or the attitude of the priest when he swings his censer.

What does it mean? It means either that these people have no hearts or no brains or that they do not use either of them,— one or the other; and whoever will may take his choice.

Do you know, by way of contrast, as to who is to go to heaven? A few people admitted because they were invincibly ignorant,— this is granted by some of the churches. A few churches admit some of the noble heathen who did the best they knew in the dark of nature. Some are coming to admit all infants, though it is illogical and inconsistent with their creed that they should. As a general thing, it is the elect, or the baptized, or those who partake of the sacraments and are true to the external forms of the Church. These are the ones who are to go to heaven. I will not dwell on that. I wish to come to another point.

What are they to do in these places? In hell, nothing but suffer. It is utterly purposeless,— no growth, no progress, no possibility of outcome except to suffer more and

more forever. It exists to illustrate the supposed justice of God. And the people who go there, according to most of the creeds, are the ones who have been elected to go there, or to be passed by and let alone, not on account of their character or what they have done, but by the pure will of the Almighty.

And what is to be done in heaven? Nothing, according to the old creeds, except to listen to music and join in it, if you can. No progress there, no growth, no hint that the great astronomers can pursue their magnificent science, no hint that an artist can either grave or paint, no hint that any of the grand men of the world can carry on their professions,— that the philosopher can study and generalize, that people can do anything human.

Notice, for example, as an illustration as to how all discussion of this sort is cut off. Mrs. Ward (Elizabeth Stuart Phelps) wrote her book "Gates Ajar"; and if you are as old as I am, and noticed anything about it, you noticed the storm it roused. Why? Because she dared to intimate that somebody had peeped through the gates ajar, and had seen that heaven was not so bad and stupid a place, after all. She said, for example, that the little girl who had hungered and had yearned all her life long for a piano might possibly have a piano. Everybody thought that was horrible. And yet, if you stop and think of it, a piano is not a bit more material than a harp, though it is a little more modern. But the Church has generally been opposed to anything that is modern.

Miss Phelps made heaven a human sort of place, where there was a chance for the play of human faculties; and since that day women like Gail Hamilton and other writers have dared to say their say. The old conception of heaven has been reformed in a hundred different directions. It is made more human, more natural; and it is believed that there is play there for the grand human faculties which men really possess and the natural functions which they enjoy.

The churches have always believed,— these old Protestant churches, — not that a person went immediately to the final heaven or the final hell. There are books written to prove, not only that the soul is detained for a time in an intermediate condition or state, but in an intermediate place as well. In other words, you will see the foundation of it is in the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. People have said man is only half a man without his body. As his body has shared in his sins, so it deserves punishment as well as his soul: his body has shared in his sacrifices and penances, so it ought to share in his rewards. So he cannot reach the final place of bliss or of torture until after the resurrection of the body and the general judgment. And almost every single one of the creeds of Christendom teaches still the resurrection of the body. They overlook a few objections which are so great as to make it an absolute impossibility. And this is not an old idea. During a little controversy that went on last year I had some correspondence with an Episcopal clergyman just over the river in a neighboring city; and he said, If there is a single Episcopal clergyman that does not believe in the literal resurrection of the body, he has no business to occupy his position. So this is not entirely an outgrown idea even among those that we fancy are more or less liberal.

Mr. Talmage, I remember, in one of his grandiloquent rhetorical sermons, gives a vivid description of arms and legs and other parts of the body that have been cut off, sunk at sea, buried on battlefields or lost in the wilderness of the West, coming flying through the air seeking their mates on the day of the resurrection of the body. And minister after minister has taught that only after the resurrection of the body and the joining of it with the soul can there be a complete and finished hell or a complete and finished heaven.

And, if you raise the question as to whether that could be heaven where people know that father, mother, brothers,

and sisters, or friends, are in hell, let me tell you that one of the commonest teachings you will find from Jonathan Edwards, from Martin Luther, clear down, is that the sight of the tortures of the damned will only increase the felicity of the blessed in heaven.

The Rev. Dr. Momerie, a popular preacher in the Established Church of England, preaching in London for a good many years, and with whom I am acquainted, says he heard a minister preach not long ago who said, "Do you suppose that the sight of your friends and relatives in hell will interfere with your eternal felicity?" And his answer was that it would not; for the saved will be so in accord with the thought of the justice of the sinner's punishment that they will even take delight in it. And Jonathan Edwards went so far as to say, not only would we on account of our belief in the justice of God acquiesce in it, but he dared to suggest the infamous thought that happiness was always increased by the sight of an opposite condition. But Dr. Momerie said that, if these things were so, he would rather go to hell than be in a heaven the inhabitants of which were engaged in such hellish delights. These are the words of a member of the Church of England, who is a preacher still.

My great objection to the hell of the Protestant churches is its infamy, its opposition not only to the love of God, but its hideous injustice. My objection to the heaven is that there is no free play for any faculties which are so human that I should care nothing about it without them. There can be no growth, no progress, no new learning, no widening out of the discovery and conquest and taking possession of the universe. I do not say that better thoughts are not coming to be preached. I do say, however, that the majority of Protestant preaching has been such as I have represented. And I do say that the creeds still stand unchanged in which these ideas are embedded like fossils in the rocks.

Let us thank God, then, that the old earth and the old heavens have passed away, and that a new earth and new heavens are coming; and let us look forward with grateful joy to their advent.

Dear Father, we are glad that we are Thy children, and are in Thy hands for treatment; that we can trust in thee, and have no fear; that, if we seek the light and truth, thou canst only commend our attempt, however weak or fallible it may be; and that Thou wilt be better to us and all those we love than we can think or dream. Amen.

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EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

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THE AGNOSTIC REACTION.

I TAKE as my text, from the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, one phrase of the ninth verse,— "We know in part."

There have been in the world, at more than one stage of its history, classes of people who claimed that they knew almost everything. There have been also — and perhaps their number is larger than ever before at the present time — those who modestly claim that they know almost nothing, who are proud, perhaps, of taking that humble position. It seems to me that Paul strikes grandly the great middle truth, when he declares that we know, but we know in part only,—when he refers to the fact that, as a child, he thought and felt and understood as a child, but, when he became a man, he put away a whole world of things that he supposed he knew as a child, and contented himself with the humble statement that he was one of those who knew only in part.

The characteristic of the childhood world is to be governed and swayed almost exclusively by feeling, to accept its beliefs through the heart by contagion of emotion rather than as the result of conviction and through the head. The lowest people that you find to-day — the lowest in culture and civilization — are the most certain of all the people in the world in regard to their beliefs,— undisturbed by doubt, accepting that which has been taught them, or which they have got by a certain emotional contagion, without any sort of doubt or question. And the chances are that they will believe that those people who doubt in any degree are in a hopeless moral and spiritual condition; that the reason for their doubt is a moral reason: that, if they were better

than they are, had been converted, had passed through a certain spiritual experience, they would see and know that which now they are blind to. This, I say, is a characteristic of early man and of men living to-day in conditions similar to those which pervaded the early world.

When we come to what has been called the Middle Ages, and which have also been called at the same time the Ages of Faith, what do we find? These ages may roughly be spoken of as covering the time from the fourth or fifth century on to the culmination of the Roman Catholic rule in the thirteenth or fourteenth century. What is the characteristic of the people of these ages? They knew almost nothing at all about this world, but they knew everything about the other. This is the most general pronounced characteristic we can discover of these epochs in the history of man.

Let us note, for example, what they knew. They knew the nature and character of God and his condition before the universe came into existence. I have been told by some of them what he was doing, what he was thinking, what he was planning; and fragments of this kind of knowledge you will find in nearly all the early and well-established creeds. They knew at a certain period in eternity that God waked up and decided to create something. He created the angels, created heaven,— this first. They knew why he did it. They knew that, after a very brief period, there was rebellion among these angels, and that a certain part of them was cast out into the abyss; and then suddenly hell came into existence as an abode for them. They knew that after that, God decided to create what we call the world,— the universe, as we see it, which was not in existence before,— and that he created man, and placed him in a certain beautiful garden. They knew that man fell, and why he fell and when he fell. Some of them carry this knowledge to such a minute extent as to tell us the day of the week on which the work of the creation was finished or on which the fall took place.

They then thought, after the fall, that man was cast out of this beautiful garden, and started this epoch of labor, of disease, of moral evil, of suffering of every kind. They knew that there was an age-long battle going on between the unseen spirits of good on the one hand and the unseen spirits of evil on the other, and that the object and crown of this battle was the possession of the human soul; that they were raging against each other, one that they might deface God's fair human creation, the other that they might protect, beautify, and glorify it.

They knew what was going on in heaven among the blessed, what was going on among the damned. They knew that both wait for the last day of judgment and the resurrection of the body, and that then everything is to be fixed in a final condition forever and ever. These things they knew all about. They did not, however, know enough about this earth that they were living on to know whether it was a flat plain or a cube or a sphere. They knew that nobody lived anywhere except on the top of it. Why? Because of a certain old Hebrew book which spoke about men's living on the face of the earth. And they knew also enough — or supposed they did — to know it was impossible for men to walk with their feet up and their heads down. So there could consequently be no people living on the other side of the earth.

You see, then, that this was the condition of things during the Middle Ages. Men knew all about the other world. Strangely enough, they knew almost nothing about this. And how had they come into possession of this knowledge? Greece had been studying science, had been philosophizing, had been making herself famous in art. Rome had developed a great literature, and established laws and an order of government which the world has been imitating ever since. But, suddenly, the progress of Greece and Rome came to an end. No more Greek philosophy, no more Greek art, no more Greek science, no more Greek

studying of the natural facts of the world. But for the happening of one thing there is no good reason to suppose that this developement of Greek knowledge and Greek investigation, Greek science, Greek art, might not have kept on until now.

What happened? One thing on the part of the leaders of Christianity happened, and that one thing put a stop for fifteen hundred years to the intellectual advance of mankind. What was that one thing? The early Church made the enormous mistake of accepting the idea that certain old books of law and history and poetry and legend and tradition, which had come into its hands from the Jews, constituted an infallible, divine revelation. That told the world all the world needed to know both about this earth and about the unseen. And its reverence for these books as infallible and inspired made it wicked to ask questions or to study. So that for a thousand or fifteen hundred years the intellectual advance of the world, in regard to this intellectual outside knowledge, practically came to an end.

I do not mean that intellectual culture, thinking, developing the subtlety of the human brain, the power to think, came to an end. By no manner of means. I believe that in what we to-day call in comparison the Dark Ages the candle of the human intelligence was still kept burning. Only, do you not see, its investigations were confined within certain narrow dogmatic limits? An artist was at liberty to paint; but the only patron he could find to buy or use the results of his genius was the Church, and he must paint traditional church scenes and ideas. He might philosophize as much as he pleased,— on the wings of speculation fly to the uttermost limits of his power to think at all; but, note you, when he got through with his flight, he perforce, at the peril of his life, must come back and settle down within the limits of ecclesiastical dogma. He might study science, investigate the nature of the earth, the nature and history of man. He might study astronomy, study any

region of the universe that was accessible to him; but, if he wished to live and keep on his scientific investigations, again he must come back and settle down quietly within the limits of ecclesiastical dogma. He might think what he pleased. If he wished to live, he must not write, publish, or speak anything not indorsed by the ecclesiastical domination that ruled the world.

This was the condition of things. Do you wonder that they were dark ages, that it took man a long while to be willing to be burned or lose his head, or be imprisoned for life for speaking one of his thoughts, for daring to communicate to somebody else his innermost ideas? A man dared not speak to his most intimate friend; for this friend might be under bonds to the Inquisition, and be obliged, as he believed, on peril of his immortal soul, to reveal what was whispered to him in the privacy of intimate friendly conversation. This was the condition of the Church for centuries, the condition of the intellectual, artistic world.

But by and by there came a change,— that change which, using the French word which first came to have this meaning, has been called the Renaissance. Following Matthew Arnold's example, who said that the word had become so thoroughly at home among us that it ought to be anglicized, we call it the renascence: it was the rebirth of man. And what started it? It was the discovery afresh and the growth of a new interest in the classics,— the writings of Horace, of Virgil, of Homer, of Plato, of Aristotle, the great philosophers, scientists, thinkers, poets of Greece and Rome. Those who become familiar with these great classics learned that the Greeks had been engaged in the study of nature, and that the kind of world they were beginning to discover was not the kind that had been outlined in the Hebrew Scriptures, which had limited their study. The artists waked up to the idea that this world was beautiful, and that it was not the kind of world described in these old writings. They began to notice that the human body,

that of man or woman, was beautiful,— the most beautiful thing on earth, infinitely more beautiful than the grief-smitten, emaciated, haggard forms of the Christ as traditionally represented, or of the saints, which had formed the staple subject of the artistic work of the preceding ages.

Philosophers began to think, stimulated by Aristotle and Plato. They began to philosophize about the universe and about human history and about the Church, and found themselves face to face with imminent danger. They could not agree with the dogmas of the Church; and they could not speak, except on peril of their lives. Now and then was found a man like Galileo, who had not the stuff in him to wish to be martyred, and so would kneel in the presence of the priests and pronounce a recantation, whispering under his breath as he rose, however, his own belief that the world did move. Now and then you will find a man like Giordano Bruno, who was so impressed with the truth that took hold of him that he must write, must speak, and yet who would flee from country to country, attempting to save his life, until at last, being trapped and being too honest to lie, would suffer himself to be burned at the stake.

These were the characteristics of the period of the Renaissance. Men began to think, to study. It was a rediscovery of this world; and it was a profound and growing doubt as to whether the Church knew so much as she claimed to know. Out of this experience what has come to be called modern science and Agnosticism at last were born. What is the characteristic of modern science? It is a demand for evidence before belief; it is asking for proof; it is saying what seems to most of us to-day mere common sense. Why should I place myself, body, heart, soul, brain, in the keeping of a claimant, who either cannot or will not bring me any decent credentials on which to base the claim to take possession of me?

It seems to us to-day — it certainly seems to me — the very last reach of impudence, of impertinence. Why should

I give my brain, body, heart, soul, into the keeping of an institution — I care not how old — that cannot give me a reason for taking possession of me that appeals to the first instincts of intelligence or common sense? Time enough that the scientific spirit and the scientific demand for at least a little bit of evidence should come into the world.

The Church said, "You must take all these things on faith." And let me suggest to you here that I wish you would study carefully the meaning of the word "faith." There is not a more abused word on the face of the earth than the word "faith." That which the Church ordinarily calls faith is the sheerest credulity. Take the position of the old Father, Tertullian, whose sweet words I quoted to you last Sunday, about exulting and rejoicing on seeing his opponents by and by in the flames of hell. What did he say about belief? ("Credo, quia impossibile est.")

"I believe because it is impossible." And he thought it a pious thing to say. The only thing that I know of to match the stupidity and insolence of a saying like that is the parody or parallel of it made by a little boy in Sunday-school, when somebody asked him what faith was. He said it was believing something you knew wasn't true.

And the Church carried this matter so far as to make it a virtue,— note, I say it with perfect carefulness and weighing the responsibility of my words,— a virtue to lie. An English bishop within this present century has said that a man had better lie — *i.e.*, deny his doubts and his real belief — than utter beliefs which would disturb the faith of the members of the Church. It may be a virtue to lie; but, if it is, I am going to practise a vicious course. I will not lie, though all the churches on the face of the earth tell me it is God's will that I should. I will appear before the throne at the last day, and say, "O God, even if what they told me was thy command, I refused to lie; and I appeal to thee as to whether I was right." I will take my chance of eternal hell on that issue.

What has been declared to be faith? Accepting any

statement which the Church wanted you to hold without reasoning or against reasoning. Now that condemns Paul's definition. I will accept Paul's definition of faith, translating it a little more freely and in modern phrase. Paul says that faith is the underlying substance of things hoped for, the persuasion of the reality of things not seen or not yet seen. That is in perfect accord with science. Darwin, Huxley, Herbert Spencer, all accepted Paul's definition of faith; and they practised it, too, every week of their lives. I heard Huxley lecture in Chickering Hall, when he was here; and he showed a splendid example of such faith. He traced the ancestry of the horse, and said that a certain number of the horse's ancestors had already been discovered, and that, if the next one ever was found, it would possess such and such characteristics, describing what sort of an animal it would be. He had hardly been in Europe six months before Professor Marsh of Yale discovered this animal's remains in Colorado; and it matched perfectly, what Huxley said it would. There was faith in the working of God in nature,— the faith that God would not deny himself, that he worked according to certain laws and methods.

Another illustration of faith: I may say I have faith in a man that I have been acquainted with for twenty years. I do not believe he would lie or steal or commit a burglary. If he is accused of either of these, and I am asked if I think he is guilty, I say, No. Did I see it done? No. Know anything about it? No; but I know the man, and believe in him. That is faith, but faith, you see, not made out of nothing. It is faith based on a long intimacy and experience, based on facts and speaking out of facts. But, if a man is accused of committing a crime,— a stranger that I never saw before,— and I should say I had faith in him and believed he was innocent, I should be talking nonsense. I should have no reason for having faith in him.

So there is a certain class of facts that come under the name of religion to which faith applies, and another large

class to which faith has no relation whatsoever. Suppose I should say, I have faith that a certain man was born in Nazareth a certain number of years ago, and up to thirty years of age followed such a course of life; that after that time he spoke certain things and did certain things,— suppose I should talk of faith in such facts. I should be talking nonsense. Why? Because the biography of any man, what he said and what he did, are matters of history,— matters for critical, scientific investigation. They are not matters to accept in the lump,— by opening your mouth and shutting your eyes, by having faith. To do that is not faith: it is sheer credulity. But there are great spiritual truths which are not dependent on history and criticism, that are such as come under the range of what is called faith. I must not detain you to go into an explanation of these. Some day I may treat the matter in a fuller and larger way.

But the result of the coming into the world of the scientific spirit after the Renaissance and the development of Agnosticism was a very practical one. Before I go into detail as to what these results were, I must give you a definition of Agnosticism; for it is a word that did not exist until Mr. Huxley invented it, although it has gone into all the dictionaries and become very common now. He belonged at a certain period of his life to a Metaphysical Club or Society that represented all sorts of philosophical and religious beliefs; they all had names except himself. One was called a Pantheist, another a Christian, another a Theist, another a Metaphysician; but he was without a name. He said it made him feel something like the famous fox after he had left an important part of him in a trap: he did not look like the rest of his friends, and did not feel at home with them. Their various names ended with an "ist," or were connected with some sort of scheme called an "ism." And it occurred to him to take the name of "Agnostic," and feel at home with the rest. And the meaning

of it was "I do not know." In the early days of Christianity men were sometimes called Gnostics, the Greek *gnosis*, which means knowledge; the Gnostics were the people who knew. This Gnostic philosophy was not a scientific society at all. They did not know on the basis of any evidence. If you had been acquainted with them, you would have found they had evolved from their inner consciousness most of the knowledge they had; but they felt they knew,— knew the invisible, knew truth, knew spiritual realities.

Mr. Huxley, in his humility, took the word "Agnostic," which means one who does not know; for he said, while all those around him knew so much about all sorts of things, he could not say he did. Why? Because he kept the word "knowledge" for its real use. Let me say to you, with all the force and frankness that I can put into the phrase, "You have no right to say you know anything, unless, on the one hand, it is a fundamental truth of consciousness, or else you have proved it, and demonstrated by adequate evidence that it is true. Most people, when they say, "I know," if you catechise them a little, you will find they believe a thing with a good deal of force. But a person has no right to say he knows, unless he does know. I have tried for years to keep the words "know" and "knowledge" for those things. There are a thousand things that I believe, that I do not know. There are a thousand things that I think, for which the evidence seems strong enough to be called probable; it is more in its favor than it is in favor of the opposite proposition; but I do not know these things, I simply believe them probable. I hold them tentatively; and I wait for evidence.

Now there is the essence of Agnosticism, as Huxley meant it. He said: "You tell me about a certain kind of God,— a kind of God who foreordained everything that was to happen in this world, and who is going to damn people who do not believe in a particular Church. You say you know it. I don't know it. As to this I am an Agnostic." "They

tell me this Bible is infallible from one end to the other," Huxley might say. "I do not know anything about it; and I think I can prove the contrary. But, if you will not accept evidence, I cannot have anything further to do with you, because I cannot talk with a man who will not hear evidence." So as to this whole range of so-called spiritual things, the existence of purgatory and hell and the traditional kind of heaven, Mr. Huxley said simply, "I don't know." No true Agnostic ever says he knows a negative can be proved any more than a positive. He may feel very strongly about it either way, like other men.

There is a certain class of men who call themselves Agnostics to-day who do not represent the true idea of Agnosticism at all. They may have different canons of proof, they may have personal bias and prejudice, so that you could not convince them with any amount of evidence that a certain thing is true, merely because they do not like it, and they do not want it to be true. Now that kind of man is not an Agnostic according to the definition of the man who invented the term at all: he is simply a bigot. For you need to remember in all these discussions that there are scientific and philosophic bigots, just as big bigots as the most bigoted theologian that ever lived in the history of the world. I know men who, if you should offer them evidence in a certain direction, would, in a lordly fashion, with a wave of the hand sweep it out of existence. They will not go two steps to look to see whether you have any evidence or not. That is bigotry. It is not Agnosticism, it is not science. So there may be Agnostic bigotry as well as Presbyterian bigotry or Baptist bigotry.

The real Agnostic is a truth-seeker. I have never found one in my life who wanted to doubt anything that a man with a heart would not wish were untrue. I have had men say to me, with tears in their voice as well as in their eyes, that they would give their life to know that there is another life after this. One of the noblest men living in this city

to-day, as once we were sitting talking together, and the long hand on the clock began to near the figure twelve, where the short hand already was, said to me: "Mr. Savage, if I could have as much evidence, personal to myself, of a continued life after death as you have had, for the price of it I would gladly die when that hand reaches twelve."

I have never found any of these men who were sneering at the beautiful faiths of the Church, who were sneering at the real Jesus, who were sneering at God, who were sneering at all hope of any future life. I have never found a man like that in all my experience. They simply reject, and are rejoiced that the evidence is not sufficient to compel them to accept, the things that are inherited from the hideous barbarism of man half-way out of the animal,— that is all. They do not want to believe in a horrible God; and I do not. They do not want to believe in a horrible hell for good people, simply because they had not a little water put on their head by a priest who was a hundred miles away when they were dying. They do not want to believe in a heaven where people are going to sit on clouds and sing hymns forever. They do not want a heaven of that kind; and neither do I. They do not want to believe in any future pictured in the old creeds.

I have been corresponding with one of the most famous of these men in the world; and he is longing with heart-break for evidence that is satisfactory to him for a belief in the kind of God that I believe in. He is longing for a belief in something that will enable him to look death in the face without any fear. He is longing for the continuance of human love and human relations. He is longing for the belief in everything that is dear and tender and true. Constituted as he is, and having studied as he has, the evidence that is commonly offered, he says, is not enough to convince him. And so he has to say, reluctantly, "Agnosco, I do not know. I wish I did; but, to tell the truth, I do not."

And if there is any God in this universe who is going to

damn him for saying he does not know, because that is the truth, I would not enter his heaven, if I had the chance offered me, to sit beside the highest ecclesiastic in the world who would be mean enough to condemn him.

This is the reaction of Agnosticism that we are in the midst of to-day, and such the men who are more or less Agnostic; and, if you only knew, you would find them in many of the pulpits of New York. I know they are there. If you only knew, you would find them sitting in front pews, and gladly paying the bills, because they think that possibly the Church is doing some good, at least morally and philanthropically, for humanity. If you only knew, you would find that the men to whom this word applies are often the noblest men, the straightest men, the farthest off from being liars, the most honest in their business, faithful and loving and true, and doubting because the evidence to them is not sufficient, and because they feel that they must be honest with themselves and tell the truth, or else, if there is another life, they would not be worth saving.

These are the men who are labelled by those who guess at their opinions "Agnostics." If that is what Agnosticism means, I am an Agnostic myself, and want all the world, that cares, to know it. I do believe, however, that there are more certainties in the world than these doubters are aware of, and that as soon as they can be made manifest to them they will gratefully accept them; and I believe that we are on the verge of discovering and making manifest the grandest beliefs of the ages, so that we can set them down with their evidence in the presence of these honest Agnostics, and have them thank us from the bottom of their hearts for enabling them to say at last, "I know."

Father, we dare to trust ourselves to Thee. We know in part, we know very little, as we are conscious of, when we are honest with ourselves; but we believe in the light which Thou hast kindled in the brain, and believe that it is possible to know some time all things that are true. Amen.

UNITARIAN CATECHISM

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

Price, Paper, per	Copy	20 cents
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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

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SERIES ON

BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

IX. The Significance of Spiritualism: an Easter Sermon

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SPIRITUALISM: AN EASTER SERMON.

I TAKE as my text from the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the churches in Corinth the fourteenth verse,— "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."

Of course, from the point of view that Paul occupied, if Jesus had not come up from the underworld and been seen alive, then their faith, that Christians were to be delivered from death, was vain, and their preaching without any adequate foundation. As most of you doubtless know, the Easter hope and the Easter celebration under some name, in some form, are thousands of years older than Christianity. But the significance of our Christian Easter lies in this one fact, to which I call your special attention. The whole meaning of it is here,— the belief that a man, whatever else or more he may have been, after he had passed through the experience called death, had been seen, had communicated with his friends, and so demonstrated that death was not the end of conscious existence. This is the significance of Easter; and this precisely is the significance that is claimed for Spiritualism.

The believers in this great faith tell us that they, too, have had communications from those who have passed through the experience called death, that they have been seen, that their voices have been heard. Mark you, for the present I am saying nothing whatever as to the truth of this claim. I wish to call your attention emphatically to the fact that the significance of the Easter claim and the claim of Spiritualism

are precisely the same; and, if they are true, they demonstrate the same great truth and fill the human heart with the same great hope.

A Spiritualist would very likely tell you that the advantage was on his side, because the evidence, whatever it may be, which is offered to us for the fact eighteen or nineteen hundred years ago, is old,— the witnesses cannot be cross-questioned; it must be taken on faith. While the advocates of Spiritualism will tell you that their facts are present, happening almost every day in the year, accessible to anybody; and they offer them to you only on the basis of the scientific claim that evidence can be shown. This is their claim; and it is a claim that we shall find of great significance as we pass on to the development of our morning's theme.

I have been showing you for some weeks past how the almost universal belief in life beyond death has been held, and has grown, in all religions, among all people. I have shown you, especially, during the last two or three Sundays, how this belief has come to overshadow the world, so that the common lives of common men have been lives of other-worldliness, so to speak,— the present life has been diminished and belittled in the comparison, until it has seemed of almost no account. I have shown you how this over-belief, that offered very little in the way of scientific evidence, that offered no present or modern facts in its support, has been reacted against by the spirit of inquiry, of question, of modern science, until there is at the present time on the part of the more intelligent classes of the people, and those who have come to accept the method of science, as I hold it to be, as the one and only method of knowledge, very serious doubts concerning these dear, precious things of the human heart that cannot as yet be demonstrated,— so far as the general opinion is concerned.

I want you to note that we are to deal this morning with a reaction against a reaction. Though it has been proved

to the satisfaction of those who have been dealing with the great, material facts of the universe that the existence of the soul and its continuance after death are incapable of proof, the great masses of the people — who love, and to whom human life is as nothing without love — have refused to accept the verdicts of science,— have refused to believe that these men who have said, "I do not know," have probed the matter to the bottom. They have said, We cannot give up the trust and the hope; and though we admit in a general way, and with regard to all other themes, the supremacy of the scientific method, yet we must believe here or we cannot live. And so, in spite of the methods and the claims of science, the great majority of the common people have clung to the hope, and believed that somehow and sometime it would be vindicated as a rational hope.

It is interesting to notice the attitude of the poets as indicating this great common belief and trust. For instance, the first verse of this hymn of Whittier's that we have just sung,—

> "Oh, sometimes comes to soul and sense
> A feeling which is evidence
> That very near about us lies
> The realm of spirit mysteries."

I have had the pleasure of talking this whole matter over with Mr. Whittier, and know that he believed the essence, the substance, of what is called Spiritualism, though he did not give much of his time to what is called investigation of the facts. But he cries out, you remember, showing how close it was to his heart,—

> "Alas for him who never sees
> The stars shine through his cypress-trees,
> . . . . . .
> Who hath not learned in hours of faith
> That life is ever Lord of death,
> And love can never lose its own."

And, then, you are familiar with those sweet words of Longfellow's: —

> "There is no death! What seems so is transition.
> This life of mortal breath
> Is but the suburb of the life Elysian
> Whose portal we call death."

I could quote to you passages from hundreds of poets,— from Sill, who has written so finely, under the title of "A Morning Thought," to Browning, who believed with his whole soul, so that he defied death, and said that he was not one to be afraid when death came, he did not wish to be delivered from any of its pictured horrors, who did not shrink from feeling the fog in his throat, who did not fear to face him in any form, and who, under the title of "Apparent Failure," another poem, asserts his great eternal hope for the poor wrecks of humanity, washed by the waves of crime to the horrible strand of the Paris morgue. Browning is not very orthodox in his faith; but he believes in God and the human soul to such an extent that he thinks they never can be finally separated.

And then there is Tennyson's lovely "Crossing the Bar," closing with the words,—

> "For though from out our bourne of Time and Place
> The flood may bear me far,
> I hope to see my Pilot face to face
> When I have crossed the bar."

Then there is a beautiful little poem by Aldrich, written after the death of his intimate friend, Bayard Taylor. I must give you just a line or two: —

> "When the soft
> Spring gales are blowing over Cedarcroft,
> Whitening the hawthorn; when the violets bloom
> Along the Brandywine, and overhead
> The sky is blue as Italy's,— he will come,
> Ay, he will come! I cannot make him dead."

And I would like to repeat to you two passages from Walt Whitman; but there is not time; so I will quote one brief one, though I have quoted it here before. Do you know I love to say it in all presences in his honor, since he was a man so misunderstood. I do not know of more than two other men in the history of this world like him in this respect,—and one of those is Jesus, and the other Socrates, —who so magnificently, so calmly, so conqueringly met death. I know of nothing in all literature to match the sweet, grand things which Whitman has written about death. This one you can place beside Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar,"—

"Joy, shipmate, joy!
(Pleased to my soul at death I cry,)
Our life is closed, our life begins;
The long, long anchorage we leave,
The ship is clear at last, she leaps!
She swiftly courses from the shore;
Joy! shipmate, joy!"

That was Whitman's welcome to death.
Note also the grand challenge of Holmes: —

"Is this the whole sad story of creation,
Told by its breathing myriads o'er and o'er,—
One glimpse of day, then black annihilation,
A sun-lit passage to a sunless shore?

"Give back our faith, ye mystery-solving lynxes,
Robe us once more in heaven-aspiring creeds!
Better was dreaming Egypt with her sphinxes,
The stony convent with its cross and beads."

The poets, then, I say, who have, almost universally,— with exceptions like Omar Kháyyám, the author of the Rubáiyát, and Byron,— touched the human heart, have sung of hope and life, not of despair and death. And yet — and here is the meaning of the point I suggested a moment ago — these men, and all modern men, have felt the touch of

this great question that has swept over modern life, that has challenged them to bring their proofs or else surrender their beliefs. And the one wonderful thing about Spiritualism, without any reference to its truth or its falsity, is what I called your attention to a moment ago, that it does not ask your blind belief. It says, Come and see, and do not believe a word beyond what you can see or hear or feel of reality that carries with it this great conviction.

Now let us look at a few of the characteristics of Spiritualism. It has filled libraries of discussion; but can receive only the briefest possible touch at the present time. What is called modern Spiritualism, as I suppose all of you know, began in Hydesville, a little town in this State, in 1848. It had been preceded, however, in the modern world by other facts, which were given a similar interpretation. The family of the Wesleys, of which John and Charles were the most distinguished members, was turned topsy-turvy by what were supposed to be visitations from the unseen world, though they were not accepted as from above, but rather taken to be devices of devils. Perhaps the most of you know that the home of old Dr. Phelps in Connecticut was haunted by similar happenings. Professor Phelps of Andover, the son of the old doctor, held the belief firmly to the last hour of his life that they had a spiritual origin, though his orthodoxy prevented him from consenting to any but a demonic explanation of the visitations. Professor Phelps, as you know, is the father of Mrs. Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward, who has written so many books dealing with themes of this character. This preceded the outbreak at Hydesville. What did that consist of? Of rappings, of movement of physical objects, of all sorts of communications. I am taking now the theory of the believer, so as to save the trouble of circumlocution. It accounted for all sorts of happenings for which they could find no explanation but a spiritual one. Of course, the cry of fraud was raised, of devil's work; but here and there were found some

to accept the belief that these things were genuine communications from the other life.

I wish to consider the attitude of the ordinary church towards this movement and similar ones.

It has always seemed to me a little curious that the average minister will tell you you are a very wicked person if you doubt immortality; and he will tell you, with equal emphasis, that you are a very wicked person if you undertake to prove it. He wants you to accept it as an article of faith. And this for a moment must be a reminiscent time for me. I understand the attitude of these men, because I have lived through it. Long before I attempted to study the matter at all, I knew all about it. I preached against it. I demolished the entire movement conclusively. I believed that it was false, foolish, wicked. I proved everything, just as a young minister is apt to do before he has studied matters. I demolished Theodore Parker in the same way before I had read one of his books. I have noticed generally that the thoroughness with which any one of these causes is demolished coincides with the ignorance of the demolisher. The people who know it all are generally the ones who know absolutely nothing about it any way. That has been the result of my research and experience.

At any rate, the ministers opposed it. And yet it has always been a wonder to me that they should not have welcomed it. The Catholic Church has been wiser. It has admitted that there have been what are commonly called "miracles" all the way down, accepts them to-day, and has said to the Protestants, — and the Protestants have had no answer, — It is very strange that God should appear to teach and guide his people in one age of the world, and should leave them without any teaching or guidance ever after.

I have wondered why ministers should not welcome demonstration, at least for the sake of those who without demon-

stration could not accept this central principle of Christianity. But I have wondered whether the truth might not be hinted at by certain experiences which I have had myself. I have had what purported to be hundreds of messages from the other side; and I have never had a single one that was soundly orthodox. Wherever Spiritualism has gone, whatever else it may have done, it has liberalized the thought of the people who have accepted it both in regard to God's dealing with this world and also as to his doings in the next.

But now one thing no church can afford to overlook. There has never been a religion on the face of the earth that did not start with precisely the same kind of happenings that Spiritualists claim are taking place to-day,— never one. Christianity started with what? Appearances of people from the other side; voices out of the unseen; apparitions, strange happenings,— precisely the same kind of happenings that Spiritualists claim are taking place to-day. Judaism was born out of the same kind of atmosphere and supposed occurrences. So was Buddhism, so was Mohammedanism, so has been every religion that I have been able to study in all my long life of research. All religions claim to have had at their beginning visions and voices, appearances, teachings, coming out of the unseen. Only it is immensely to the advantage of Spiritualism, let me repeat again, that the happenings are supposed to take place to-day, the witnesses are alive, can be cross-examined. You can find out whether they are honest men or whether they are dishonest, whether they have been deluded or whether they have really found out something of value. You can find out these facts to-day; while concerning the basis of all the other religions you must simply take the questions at issue on faith, because they are no longer capable of investigation. In regard to most of them there is not a single first-hand witness to any of these strange occurrences. The only first-hand witness that we have to the seeing of Jesus after his death is Paul; and Paul does not claim to

have seen him in the body which was buried in the tomb. He saw him in a vision on the road to Damascus.

Now I wish, because I find myself continually misunderstood and misrepresented, to state one or two things concerning my own personal attitude. I read a paper some years ago at Saratoga before the National Conference on "Immortality and Modern Thought." I was not a little interested and amused after the meeting to find that a lot of my good friends, who hated Spiritualism, had gone out saying, "Savage has lost his head, and gone over to the Spiritualists." And there were a lot of Spiritualists there who went out of the meeting angry and disgusted because I was not a believer, or at any rate did not dare to say so. On one side they were angry because I had seemed to be for it, and on the other side because my attitude seemed against it. My conclusion was that probably I had hit the middle path of truth and soberness.

I have never called myself a Spiritualist. I have been charged with being a coward and time-server for not doing so. I believe that at the heart of Spiritualism there is a great truth, perhaps not yet clearly outlined, understood, or demonstrated; but I have never been able to call myself a Spiritualist, because, as that word is used popularly in the newspapers, it would utterly misrepresent me. There are so many things connected with the movement that I not only do not believe, but with which I am disgusted beyond words, that I am not willing yet to wear the name. I hardly need say that it is no cowardice. If I have never proved anything else in the last thirty years, I think I have proved to those who are acquainted with me that I am not afraid to wear any label which belongs to me.

Spiritualism as organized has been its own worst enemy. There have been a large class among them who are so credulous that, no matter what sort of a story you tell them, they will simply ask for a bigger one. I was telling you the other day that Tertullian, the old Church Father, said he be-

lieved "because it was impossible." This comes very near the attitude of a great many Spiritualists I have met. They will believe anything, no matter what, that is told them, without investigating or asking for evidence.

Another thing that has been against them — not with me, however, I take pride in saying — is that the movement started with the poor and the meek and lowly ones of earth; but there is a striking parallelism right in there with early Christianity. You know people went around then, not asking whether Jesus was a real prophet or whether what he said was true, but how many of the scribes or the Pharisees believed on him. Men commonly wait for a popular movement before they join.

Spiritualism started in this same way; and I have met a great many people who have confessed to me privately that they believed, but would not say so because it was not popular. One famous English scientific man told me in private conversation that he had been experimenting for years, and knew that Spiritualism was true; but, he added, I don't talk with people about it; because I used to call every man who had anything to do with it a fool, and I don't enjoy being called a fool. So he kept still. This is the attitude people have taken in regard to it; and to-day you can never get at the number of Spiritualists by the census. I venture to believe that you cannot take a stand on any spot on Manhattan Island and sling a stone without there being somewhere within the radius of its fall one or more families who are studying Spiritualism privately in their own houses, and who are believers, but dare not let their next-door neighbors know it for fear of ridicule. I have had people, when I was travelling, sit down beside me, and evidently feel their way. They would ask a question or make a statement just to try me, to see whether I was going to shut them up. The moment they found I was sympathetic, they would tell me wonderful things within the range of their own experience. So the country is full of people who have

had strange things happen to them, and who believe or at least wonder if there is not something in it.

One of the worst enemies of Spiritualism is the dishonest practitioner, the fake medium, or the people who cover him up through any personal favor, or, as they mistakenly think, for the honor of the cause and to save it from disgrace. If there is any man on the face of this earth meaner, more utterly contemptible than any other man, it is he who will take money, coined from the broken hearts, from the hopeless tears of those who long to know whether their dead are alive; and take it, not even for what they believe to be a genuine message from the other side, but simply for the sake of the money. When a person will do that, I do not believe there is anything on the face of the wide earth too mean for him to do.

These are some of the obstacles that have stood in the way of the progress of the movement called Spiritualism.

Now one word in its favor, so far as it goes. I have said I do not call myself a Spiritualist. I shall announce to you frankly, later on, what I believe and where I stand. There are certain things that ought to be said in defence of Spiritualism. The other day all the newspapers in New York had long articles as to the belief of the Rev. Dr. Abbott of Plymouth Church; and they were coupled with an account concerning the belief of Dr. Hillis, his successor, both of whom believed, according to their own statements, all that is essential to Spiritualism, only they were both very careful and most anxious to guard themselves against the possible suspicion of belief in such vulgar things as a rap on a table or a movement of a physical object. For the life of me I can never understand what there is so foolish or degrading in a rap. Suppose you were in one room of a hotel and I in another, and I should want to call on you. If I am courteous and half-polite, I do not open the door, and rush in without finding out whether you want to see me or not. I tap on the door to announce myself. Suppose I

have a friend in the Unseen, close by me, who wishes to communicate something to me, and finds he can call my attention by a tap. Is there anything so very silly about it? If there is, I am too dull to discover it.

And, then, as to this question of the movement of physical bodies. Did you ever think,— please stop and consider this, for it is the essence of the whole matter,— if there is a power in the universe that is capable of lifting a grain of wheat or a hair without the use of any muscular or physical effort, then he who has discovered this has crossed the Rubicon and has answered the question as to whether this universe is material or spiritual. If a particle of matter can be moved without muscular contact or physical force, in the ordinary sense in which those words are used, then it is demonstrated to all the world that there is unseen spiritual power at work there; and, if these movements indicate intelligence, then the power that moves is an intelligent power.

And yet people talk about these things as though they had no significance at all. This is the shallowest way of dealing with the matter. I have had it said to me a thousand times that whatever claims to come from the other side is always silly and foolish, nothing dignified, nothing worthy. That, again, shows that the person who makes the statement is not acquainted with the facts. I have had what purported to be hundreds of messages come from the other side, and many have asked me what kind of messages they were. I have frequently replied that they were very much on the level of my daily mail. I get some very silly things every morning in my mail, some malicious things, some stupid things. I get some things tender and noble and sweet, some things full of intelligence. And, if we could once get our heads free from the nonsense inherited from the old and discarded ideas of the past,— such as the idea that the moment a man dies he is either a devil or an angel,— this is just what we should expect. If I should die on this platform this morning, and come to conscious-

ness in five minutes, I should expect to be neither more foolish nor more wise than I am now. Why should I be? And, if I should send you a message, why should it not be on the average of my present intelligence?

The very silliest thing on the face of the earth, it seems to me, that people do is to go to mediums for advice, particularly in regard to financial matters. I am fairly up in arithmetic; but I should hope nobody of sense would come to me, if they could, after I was dead, about stocks on Wall Street. I do not know why I should be supposed to know so much about a thousand things because I am dead. Fools die every moment; and I suppose they are as big fools five minutes afterwards as they were before. If I wanted advice in financial matters, I would rather have a word from Pierpont Morgan than from a congress of a thousand spirits, although I knew the message genuine.

This by way of a hint that you can elaborate in a hundred directions, and see how silly it is to go to "business mediums," as they advertise themselves.

To recur to this question of intelligence that purports to come from the other side, let me say to you, Find out whether the people who make this claim know what they are talking about. There is no end of trash that purports to come as communicated from the other world. At the same time there is a whole library of the noblest morals and spiritual teaching that I am acquainted with. I know one book, for example, the author of which was an Oxford graduate, and who during a large part of his life was connected with the School Board of the city of London, a member of the Church of England when he began, and afterwards a clergyman in that Church, who became a Spiritualist and a medium both. His book was written automatically, as he tells us, through his own hand. Sometimes in order to divert his thoughts from what he was writing, he would sit and read Plato in the original Greek, while his hand was at work on its own account. And this

book, contrary to what people ordinarily believe, went squarely against his own religious creeds, and converted him before he got through; and it contains some of the noblest ethical and spiritual teachings to be found in any Bible in all the world.

So do not trust the first squib that you come across in the newspapers in regard to the character of the communications or what happens on these occasions: just do a little inquiring on your own account. The newspapers are not always infallible in regard to all these matters.

The ethics of Spiritualism as published by its best representatives are as high and fine as you can find connected with any religion on the face of the earth. This does not prove its peculiar claims at all; but it does prove that it is not a movement to be treated with utter scorn and contempt or as being connected with the off-scouring of the earth. Early Christianity, you will remember, if you will read over the writings of Paul, was made up of the people that the respectable did not have anything to do with. Spiritualism has until modern times been made up of much the same class of people. But now such names as Mrs. Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Lloyd Garrison, and others by the score, are associated with it; and some of the noblest, most intelligent people with whose names you are familiar were open and avowed adherents of Spiritualism.

Remember, then, that this is a great and, in the main, genuine, sincere movement, and that, whether its claims or any part of them shall ever be found true or not, it stands for the same great hope that makes the glory of our Easter morning.

Dear Father, we thank Thee that hope springs eternal in the human breast, that it will not down, and that, if requiring proof, it will seek for proof until it finds it, that this is one of those questions that the human mind will never tire of investigating until it be discovered and proved. For this we thank Thee, and in this trust we take heart and courage. Amen.

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SERIES ON

BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

X. The Present Condition and the World's Needs in regard to this Matter of Belief in Immortality

GEO. H. ELLIS
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THE PRESENT CONDITION AND THE WORLD'S NEEDS IN REGARD TO THIS MATTER OF BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY.

BEFORE coming to deal with my theme proper, I wish to make a slight and brief prelude. Nearly all the papers that quoted last Sunday's sermon reported it with remarkable accuracy and care. Two or three of them conspicuously did not; and therein lies the trouble that has come to me during the past week. Several papers, for example, announced in flaring head-lines, as though they wished merely to make something startling to catch the eye, that I had changed suddenly my opinion, that I had recently become a Spiritualist, etc., when perhaps, six lines away from the big head-line was the clear and explicit statement that, in the popular use of that word, I was not a Spiritualist and never had been.

This shows that newspaper reporters are sometimes careless, sometimes in a hurry, to say the least.

And one other point, I think, is fairly worthy of your attention. This kind of reporting has had the result of flooding me with one of the most curious collection of letters that I have ever received. They have come from this city, from all over New England, from the South and from the West. Some of the writers were glad that at last I had seen the light, as they thought. Others were lamenting, in most serious fashion, that at last I had been swept off my feet, and had finally gone astray. Others threw Scripture texts at me without giving their names or an

opportunity to explain. Others requested that I would answer the criticisms, which they had made, through some one of the daily papers which I never take, and could not be hired to read.

In other words, I said last Sunday, you will remember, that the level of the reports that claimed to come to me from the other side has been about on the level of my daily mail. I wish now to bear testimony that the average level, as to intelligence, good sense, logic, and character, that has come to me, claiming to be from the other side, has been a good deal above the average of my daily mail during the past week. If I received messages of this sort knowing that they came from the other side, I should be afraid to die, lest I should lose what little sense I have already.

This, of course, does not refer to all of the letters. Some of them were conspicuous for their sense, their critical ability, their suggestiveness. But I wanted you — if any of you had got from these reports some slight or false idea of where I stand — to remember that I have not told anybody in New York yet, in public, just where I do stand. I intend to tell before I am through this course of sermons; for, if there are no other ministers on the face of the earth, there are at least two connected with this church who have no private opinions which they are afraid to speak in the ears of all the world.

If anybody should choose to leave this church because I felt compelled to tell the truth, I should be very sorry; but I should try to tell the truth just the same. I cannot quite understand what a minister is standing in a public place or speaking at all for, unless he speaks the uttermost, the deepest, the most sacred thing that he has in his heart.

This simply by way of preface. When I come to the discussion of the work of the Society for Psychical Research, in the closing sermons on this theme, I shall tell you what I think I know; but I shall not try to play the priest, I shall not try to thrust my opinions upon you. I

will only ask you what I think is fair,— that you give me the credit of being honest, that you listen to my reasons, and take them if they seem adequate, and not if they do not. That is all.

I take as a text from the sixth chapter of Matthew the twenty-second verse: "The light of the body is the eye. If, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light."

My theme this morning is the present condition of thought, of belief, in regard to immortality, in so far as my experience, my correspondence, my years of acquaintance, have led me to think or know, and then to point out what seem to me some imperative needs for certainty, provided certainty can be attained. If there be no certainty, why, then, we must stumble on as best we may.

In the first place, I wish to note that nobody questions that the evidence on which, as Christians, we accept our faith in immortality is old, is far away, is waning in its power over the popular mind. One of my critics in a newspaper during the last week — I do not remember which paper nor which critic — said that to question the evidence for the resurrection, the reappearance of Jesus, would take away the reason for belief in the existence of all the famous Greeks and Romans. It seemed to me that he was not particularly wise in making such criticism. If my eternal salvation depended on my belief in the existence of Cicero or the accuracy of some reported saying of Socrates, then there would be a parallel between that criticism and the actual situation. It would become a burning question for all men earnestly to discuss as to whether Cicero did live, as to whether Socrates did speak certain words. But now suppose somebody should prove that Cicero was a myth, and his orations were delivered — as some one once humorously said — by another man of the same name. What difference does it make to us? Suppose nobody can get at the precise

verbal accuracy of a single one of Plato's writings, except for the sake of our literary regret, who cares? Nobody's soul, nobody's future, nobody's heaven or hell, depends on any of these questions. So that, when anybody suggests a parallel between one case and the other, he is talking either without seriousness or without good sense, one or the other.

It becomes a matter of great importance to us as to whether we have any good evidence coming down from eighteen hundred years ago that somebody who had been called dead had been seen alive. And yet, as I said last Sunday, we have only one first-hand witness to any such thing having ever occurred; and that witness testifies that he never saw Christ in the body in his life, only saw him in a vision on the road to Damascus.

The testimony then is old: the witnesses cannot be cross-questioned. We do not know who wrote Matthew or who wrote Luke or Mark or John. We know nothing of the authorship of any New Testament book,— nothing certainly, I mean,— with the exception of a few of the Epistles ascribed to Paul. No wonder, then, as these facts of knowledge become common property among the people, that there grows a question, a doubt, as to some of these great things that have been taken on the testimony, the tradition, of the Church.

You remember the old fable of the Hindus, how the earth rested on an elephant, the elephant on a tortoise, the tortoise on something else, and so on clear down. As we go up the stream of human tradition, we find that one man says that somebody else said a certain thing, and somebody else said the same thing to him, and some one else to him, until at last we can find nobody at all who saw or heard anything at first hand. All scholars know this. What wonder, then, that doubt at last permeates the Church itself, and that Christians begin to wish that they might come somewhat nearer knowing,— knowing that one thing which is nearer to the heart of the world's misery or happi-

ness than anything else that can be conceived. The attitude of great masses in the Church is perhaps best set forth by these saddest, tenderest words that Lowell ever wrote: —

Yes, faith is a goodly anchor;
  When skies are sweet as a psalm,
At the bows it lolls so stalwart,
  In its bluff, broad-shouldered calm.

. . . . . .

But, after the shipwreck, tell me
  What help in its iron thews,
Still true to the broken hawser,
  Deep down among seaweed and ooze?

Then better one spar of Memory,
  One broken plank of the Past,
That our human heart may cling to,
  Though hopeless of shore at last!

To the spirit its splendid conjectures,
  To the flesh its sweet despair,
Its tears o'er the thin-worn locket,
  With its anguish of deathless hair.

Immortal? I feel it and know it:
  Who doubts it of such as she?
But in that is the pang's very secret,—
  Immortal away from me.

Is not this really the condition of thousands in Churches where they think they believe and have been taught that they believed from childhood? I had a letter not a great while ago from a woman down in Maine, whom I have never seen. She was a young woman, married four or five years; and her husband was a physician. He was fond of fishing, and was one day drowned; and she was left alone. She writes me such a curious letter. I shall not give it to you: it is too private, too sacred; but it dripped with tears of utter despair. She had been a member of an orthodox church all her life: she said she had supposed she

believed; but suddenly the hawser had broken, and she was afloat under skies with no sunshine. And, curiously enough, to show the drift of public opinion, she says: "I write to you because you are not of my Church. If I should go to my minister, he would feel obliged to tell me what the Church teaches. I write to you because I know you are tied to nothing but your opinion of what is true; and you will tell me just what you think." And she pleaded with me to tell her if I really believed in God, if I really believed in any future life.

This is a hint of what I have found in many sad cases. I find that people are taught that they believe; and they believe that they believe until the stress comes, and then everything is adrift. Not only the people in the pews. I am accused sometimes of accusing my brethren: I do not mean to. I know that the worst thing I am doing is to talk a little out of school. Perhaps I ought not to do that. But let me give you one illustration of a condition of things in the pulpit. There was a minister, who is not living now, whose name was a household word in almost every home in America,— a minister supposed to be in the main orthodox, at any rate as orthodox as Dr. Abbott. I preached once in the city in which he lived on a week-day evening, when he was free; and he was in the audience. When we got through, he walked down the aisle with me, and said, "I agree with every single word that you have spoken to-night," and then added, with a touch of genuine pathos in his voice, "only I wish I felt as sure about the future as you seem to." Two or three days later I had a private talk with him in his own home; and he, a Christian minister with a Christian following, with all the Christian traditions behind him, the Bible in his hands, said to me quietly and privately, "Mr. Savage, for the first time in my life you have given me at least *some evidence* of a future life."

There is this great sweep of doubt over Christendom at least. The faith is an old tradition, weakening as the years

go by; and it is not strong enough to make people glad and brave in the face of death. Paul, as I told you some weeks ago, could meet death with a shout of triumph. Who does it now? Who says, It is better to die and be with Christ? Do we not shroud our homes, our bodies, and our hearses in the blackest of dismal black, as showing how little we truly hope of life beyond the grave?

I have told you already the position the Agnostics have come to assume. They do not want to disbelieve in God or a future life; but they have come to believe that honesty compels them to say that they know what they do know and do not know what they do not know,— that is, to tell the truth, and they tell it with brave hearts, though their lips quiver, not because they are in love with doubt.

Then there is a certain sect — small, I think, as the civilized world is searched — of out-and-out materialistic atheists. Not merely doubters, but men who think it is demonstrated that there is no soul or spirit, and that there is no God, and, therefore, no future.

I corresponded a few years ago with one of the then most famous men, Dr. Maudsley, the author of a large number of powerful and weighty books in which he deals with what he regards as science. In one of his letters he writes, a little humorously, though the humor was somewhat grim, "Why, Mr. Savage, as I look over the world and see, not the kind of people that we create as ideals, but people as they really are, all the way from bushmen and tramps clear up to the common kind of millionaire, I cannot make it seem worth while on the part of the universe to keep them." He said it seemed to him that it was the worst kind of economy to perpetuate such creatures through all the coming time. I had but one answer to give him. I suggested in my next letter that it seemed to me barely possible that some of the millionaires, as well as some of the tramps, might have germs of possibility within them that would some day come to something really worth while to keep.

That is the foundation stone of evolution; and I really think it is a more sensible position than the doctor's, though he never confessed to me whether he agreed with me or not.

Then there are thousands and thousands of men who are simply afloat, adrift. They do not know where they are nor what they believe. They have gained a smattering of modern science. They are suspicious of religious tradition. And they are so many that, as Mr. Moody says, out of about seventy millions of inhabitants in this country there are no more than thirty millions who ever go to any kind of church. I am not at all sure that this is true. I hope it is not. I give it on Mr. Moody's authority only. But, if it is, half the people in the world no longer care enough about the great sacred traditions and issues of religion to ever step inside a church; and it is a most terrible indictment against the Church,— more, I think, than against the people who stay away.

If people get nothing in a Church but superannuated and dried-up dogma, absurdities, things that they would not call common sense five minutes after they had left the church doorway, why should they go to church? Why should you take the trouble three times a day to gather from all over the town, wherever you may be, and sit around a table called a dinner table, if there is nothing on it to eat or nothing for which you have any sort of relish? It may be, then, the fault of the church, if these statistics be true.

But there are thousands of these men who do not talk about it. As one famous old minister said once, when a young, zealous enthusiast tried to get him to talk, and, failing, burst out with, "Have you no religion at all?" "None to *speak of*," was the reply. So there are thousands of people who do not unbosom themselves: they do not stop the first man they meet on the street, and tell him they really doubt whether they shall ever see the wife who died the week before or the child that was taken away in the

night. These doubts exist; but people are chary of speaking of them. Let me give you an illustration of the kind of talk that comes out when a man feels perfectly free. I have an old friend who lives in another city. I have known him for more than twenty years. We met in Paris. I had not seen him to speak with for some years. I knew he had a pew in an Episcopal church, that his wife was a devout believer and a constant attendant. I knew from past experience with him that his religious faith was not particularly strong. He said to me: "Savage, here I am walking on a plank; and it reaches out into the fog, and I have got to keep walking. I can see only ten feet ahead of me, possibly. I know that pretty soon I must walk over the end of that plank,— perhaps to-night, perhaps next year, perhaps in twenty years. I don't know when; and, when I walk over it, I haven't the slightest idea into what, and I don't believe anybody else knows. And," he added, "I don't like it."

If you could get at the secret heart of thousands of the noblest and best men of our modern civilized time, you would find they occupy a position very similar to that.

Here is this great, wide-spread doubt, then, eating into the Church, teaching the materialistic philosophy, threatening to darken the skies of the Agnostic, taking the heart and hope out of the noblest men and women; while the great majority — if you press them with the question as to whether they know — will tell you, if they are frank, that they do not.

Now, if this is a condition that cannot be helped, why the best we can do is to be as reconciled to it as possible, forget it as long as we can, and let the matter go. But I cannot understand the thought, or lack of thought, of the thousands of people who act as though it were not worth considering, or are not ready to turn their hands over to decide the question one way or the other. For, in my judgment,— and I am going now to tell you a few of the reasons why,— there is no other question on the face of the earth for one mo-

ment comparable to it in importance. As Professor Hyslop of Columbia said to us the other night, we put thousands into an expedition to dredge some deep sea or to explore the pole, and see if we can discover at last its ice-locked secret. We are piling up thousands — we that have them — in all sorts of expeditions and explorations; and yet these same men never stop to experience for one moment the reality that right here, within our own bosoms and brains, is an ice-locked pole and a Darkest Africa more inaccessible to most than any spot on the round globe, and about which the wisest men know least of all the things of which they are most ignorant.

Let us now consider for a moment. It seems to me that it is exceedingly important for us, if possible, to decide as to whether we are animals, without souls, or whether we are souls, wearing our animal bodies; for, as I love to say a thousand times over, I do not believe for a minute that I have a soul. If I have, I might lose it, as the theologians say. I believe I am a soul, and have a body.

But the great question to be decided first of all in this whole realm is to find out for certainty — not as a matter of belief, as I have just put it — whether it can be demonstrated that I am a soul. Can we prove yet that thought is not as much a product of the brain as that bile is of the liver? That is what some of the materialistic philosophers ask; and they say that we have not yet proved the contrary. That is the point. Am I a soul? If I am, then, at the least, I am a good deal different kind of being from what I should be if I were only a body,— a temporary machine for grinding out thoughts which are to cease when the machine gets tired. In other words, I can never know myself until I know whether I am a soul or not. There are certain numbers of men who, with the grand quality of Matthew Arnold, can say,—

> "Is there no other life?
> Pitch this one high."

But the great majority of men are more likely to say with Paul, If we have no other life, "let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die." That is the common philosophy about it.

I need to know, next, whether I am a soul, not only for the sake of finding out what sort of a being I am, but in order to place in their relative positions of importance the great interests, ambitions, pursuits of humanity. If I am an animal only, a thinking machine, the machine and the thought both destined to end after a little time, why, then, it makes a great deal of difference in the value to me of a political or social position, of money, of fame, of friends, of selfish indulgence in certain things I happen to care for. If I am a soul, then all the great mountain heights, the lofty peaks of the world, from my high position of observation are levelled out and down, the valleys are lifted up and the mountain peaks are made plain, as it was prophesied they would be to those who occupy this position.

But, if I am only a body, with a few bodily tastes for a few years to satisfy, you may preach to me as much as you please; but I am not going to live the same kind of life that I would find natural and reasonable if I were a soul. What is the use of self-sacrifice, of self-denial, for fifty or sixty years, when all that is to come of it anyhow is to go under the sod and the whole thing be forgotten, neither God nor man nor angels to remember or care? Will you tell me why on that philosophy of life I should sacrifice myself and suffer overmuch? My happiness and comfort are at least as important as those of anybody else. Why should one person on that theory sacrifice a moment's peace for the sake of a similar moment's peace for somebody else? There is no end, no object, in it all; for the peace of both sacrificed and sacrificer goes into dust, and that is the end of it.

The decision of this question, when it comes, is going to make a great difference with our political theories and practices. Professor Hyslop, those will remember who heard

him, touched on some of these points; but I shall not consider myself a plagiarist if I refer to them, because I preached on the same points some years ago. Neither was he a plagiarist; for I have no doubt he never read my sermon. It is simply that two men have come to think alike on certain great points. In the Middle Ages there was a spiritual power that was able to lift the humble and put down the high. In those days any poorest peasant might become the thrice-crowned pope, at whose feet all spiritual authorities lower than he would bow in humility. You remember an illustration which I will use for my purpose, because it is familiar to you all,— how Cardinal Richelieu, the weak, trembling old man, drew an imaginary line about his niece Julia, and cried to the king and his courtiers: —

> "Then wakes the power which in the age of iron
> Burst forth to curb the great and raise the low.
> Mark, where she stands! around her form I draw
> The awful circle of our solemn Church!
> Set but a foot within that holy ground,
> And on thy head — yea, though it wore a crown —
> I launch the curse of Rome!"

And the king trembled in the presence of the paralytic old man, and fell on his knees in fear.

There was a power then that could come to the defence of manhood and humble the mighty; but we are in a democratic age now. Nobody cares very much for the pope except those that are nearest to him. I have heard good, devout Catholics in this country talk in this way. They say, It is all very well for the pope to manage spiritual affairs; but, when he dictates to me as to where I shall send my child to school or how I shall vote, then I am done with him. This indicates the coming of a new spirit into the Church. Old spiritual power then is waning; and we need a power to take its place, if there be one possible,— a power that shall make men feel the awful responsibility of being

men, and make them feel that not at some future time only, but day by day, they stand at the awful judgment-seat of the Almighty and Omniscient God, and that the universe is against them, if they are against the right. We need a doctrine that shall teach men this in politics, we need it in society.

If we are not souls, but only bodies, those of us that happen to be rich and able to deck and array our bodies, and command the unquestioning obedience of the great masses of the people, are free. We have nothing in the future to fear. We will take the grandeur and the greatness of it as we go along; and we will use the rabble for our behoof. This has been the attitude of men so situated. But let the doctrine be taught not only, but believed by rich and poor, let it be known to be God's truth, that each man is the son of God, each woman a daughter of God, and that the little time that we are spending here below is but a moment in our eternity, and that we are making ourselves by our characters, and that the eternal future hangs, hinges, and turns on character and truth and right, and not on power and frippery and the display of wealth, do you not see the different kind of world that would be the result?

Then take it industrially. I have a friend who has spent years abroad studying the industrial conditions. Fortunately, he is financially situated so that he can go where he pleases and stay as long as he pleases, and meet the men in office, the men who labor and study, and converse with the authors of books on the subject, and become perfectly familiar with the situation. He said to me four or five years ago that he considered the settlement of this question as to whether we are souls or merely bodies as more important to the settlement of our industrial problems than any and all other considerations whatsoever. For he said, Go to Germany, study the masses of people in Europe, and they say, It used to be the nobility and the Church, they had it all their own way: they told us to be content in the position in which

Providence has been pleased to place us, postpone to another world our reward. Now, he says, it is not the nobility, they are beginning to break down: it is the bourgeoisie and the Church, the comfortable middle classes and the Church; and they still tell us that we must be humble and content in the place in which it has pleased Providence to place us. But they say: We have studied science, we have read Huxley, and Darwin and Herbert Spencer; and we do not believe any longer in your bugaboo God or Devil. We doubt whether there is any future life, and we do not propose any longer to be put off to the future for our share of the comforts of living. And when the great teeming and seething millions come to hold a creed like that, why all the institutions of society, its sacredness, its cathedrals, its colleges, its universities, its nobility, its great men, will be only flotsam and jetsam on the tide of a flood such as never has been dreamed of before.

For the sake of social order, of industrial satisfaction and peace, then, men need to be taught,— no lies, mind you; I would teach them the truth, if I knew it, though the world came to an end in a week,— but, if it is true, they need to be taught that they are souls, and that how they live, what kind of lives they live, whether they cultivate mind and conscience and heart and become noble men and women, are a great deal more important things than the kind of houses they live in or the things that the Gentiles, in the words of Jesus, are accustomed to seek after.

Then there is another class of people — I must speak of these briefly — that need to know. I can give you the point of view that I wish you to occupy better by telling you of a specific case that came under my pastoral care. A lovely, noble woman, not a member of my own society, came to me one day, and said, I would like to tell you about my nephews. If I should mention the names of those nephews, most of you would know what family they belonged to,— one of the best in Boston. This aunt came to me, and said: "Mr.

Savage, I have come to you for a little advice. I am at my wits' end. I do not know what to do. Here are my two nephews, whom I have loved since they were little boys; and they are growing wild and unmanageable, throwing away their manhood, dissipating their characters, and I find I have no sort of influence over them. They said to me the other day: 'Why, auntie, what is the use of talking? We have read Darwin, we know a little something about evolution,'— this was their reading of it, which I do not agree with, as you know,—'we don't believe any more of that flimsy nonsense about a future life. You can't scare us any more by talking about the devil and hell and God's anger. We have got beyond that. And we are rich,'— their father was wealthy,—'we have got all the money we want or expect ever to want. Now, auntie, we propose to do just as we please. We are going to have a good time. We are going to indulge in all sorts of things that we desire; and you know perfectly well that there isn't a family in the city that wouldn't be glad to have us marry into it, in spite of their knowing all about what we do. Now, what is the use of talking?'"

And she said, How can I answer them? My reply was: There is but one answer. If I could look into the faces of those young men, and say, I know, and I can make you know by scientific demonstration that you are going to live, that you have got to live whether you want to or not, and that as you cross the border line you take with you what you are, your own mean, selfish, warped, contemptible selves,— if you have made yourselves such,— and that there is not a moment's peace for you in all eternity until you come into harmony with the eternal peace of God,— if I could say to them that, it seems to me that we would have in our hands the mightiest ethical power of which the world ever dreamed. We could transform the world.

Two other things I must hint at in a word. Would it not be worth while to be certain, for the sake of the comfort and

peace that it would bring to our own hearts? I know people who do not talk very freely about these things until they get very well acquainted with each other. But I have had people, after knowing them for years, break out, and say: We do not know anything about it; and nobody does. It is a horribly unpleasant subject. Do not let us speak of it. I have tried to push it out of my sight and keep it out of my consciousness. I know it's got to come; but do not let us speak of it. That is the attitude of thousands of people. As Paul said, "Through fear of death all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Now, if it were possible to prove that beyond this life is another, that death is simply a gateway that lets us out into a larger and nobler existence,— if we could just know that, would not it be worth while for the sake of the comfort and happiness it would bring to the great majority of men? I do not say it is possible yet to know it. If so, would not it be worth while?

And, then, here is that father,— it seems almost cruel to speak of it,— compelled by business to be in another city over one night, returning in the morning to find three children and wife gone forever from his sight and touch, unless this hope of ours be true. All of us have friends who have passed into the unseen. It is not any very great amount of comfort to me to think of them as having gone into utter nothingness, and that I am following them there; for people talk foolishly about this kind of death being a rest. How can that be rest of which nobody is ever conscious and never can be? There is no rest about it. It is simply fooling ourselves with words, abusing the dictionary. All of us have some friends who have passed into the unseen; and would it not be worth the study of years to know, if it be possible, that we shall see them again and shall know them, and that we shall resume the companionships that have been dearer to us than life here? Why, if this could be once known, the earth would never again be

draped in black, the skies could never again weep with rain, every wind would be an anthem, and every morning the dawn of an eternal day.

Father, we thank Thee that, by Thy grace, we have this hope that is in our hearts which we dare cherish, and which we hold in the trust that some day we shall know and be able to say it is true. Amen.

UNITARIAN CATECHISM

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

Price, Paper, per	Copy	. . . . .	20 cents
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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

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SERIES ON

BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

XI. Probabilities which fall short of Demonstration

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PROBABILITIES WHICH FALL SHORT OF DEMONSTRATION.

My text is from the seventh verse of the third chapter of Titus,— "The hope of eternal life."

If you think I am a little negative as I start out, you will see that my entire purpose is positive and reconstructive as I get towards the end. Though this theme does not take us quite far enough, it does, I think, take us close to the borderland of that which is real and eternal. Oliver Wendell Holmes once said that, if any one wished not to come into contact with liberal thought in this modern world, if he did not wish to have any doubts of his old-time and traditional ideas, then he must keep away from the common atmosphere of the world, he must let the newspapers, the magazines, the reviews alone, he must stop reading and stop thinking, he must shut himself away from the common light of heaven; for these things are in all the air.

If that could be said by Dr. Holmes concerning ordinary liberal ideas, much more it can be said concerning this great question of a future life. Blessed, say I, are they who are disturbed by no doubts, whose old-time tradition, whose sweet memories of what mother taught, the echoes of the services in the old-time meeting-houses, are sufficient. Blessed, I say, are these; for they escape a good deal of the torture, the suffering, that comes of doubt and question, which doubt and question, however, are absolutely forced upon those who think in the world of to-day. There is no escaping them, they are in all the air; and you can keep your childhood faith untouched only by keeping away from contact with people who think and ask questions. And yet

it is possible that the self-culture wrought out by the doubt and study is worth while.

The number of persons in the civilized world to-day who have more or less questioned about continued personal conscious existence after death, is unspeakably greater than it was a century ago, and beyond any dispute the number is increasing; and it is increasing just in the most important part of this human life of ours. It is increasing among the thinkers, the readers, those who are becoming of such a state of mind that they must have proof, have evidence, before they can quite accept any position.

Some of these probabilities, these positions that have heretofore been urged as arguments in favor of a future life, but which are not scientific demonstration, we are to consider this morning; and this consideration will lead us to the next step, which, I trust, we shall be able to take together next Sunday morning.

When I was contemplating this series of sermons, I wrote a very large number of letters, a good many to Unitarian ministers, a good many to ministers of other faiths, a good many to prominent laymen; and in these letters I asked two questions: First, Do you believe in a conscious personal existence after death? You might think it almost an insult to write a letter like that to a minister, but I did it; and the second question was, Why do you believe in it? I wanted to find out, so far as possible, the basis on which this belief rests in the minds of some of the higher and better thinkers of the land.

To my great astonishment, I found several ministers who were not at all certain of it in their own minds, who had grave and serious doubts as to whether there was any conscious personal existence for themselves or for anybody else after death. And beyond this what did I find? Of course, I must never mention any names; and, if anybody guesses as to what person I may mean, they will guess wrong every time. I found only two, or possibly three, persons out of

all those to whom I wrote, who gave me what, if I were a doubter and were seeking for scientific proof, would be one single particle of evidence. From only two or three did I get anything that I should count evidence in the scientific sense of the word. And I had to feel, as the pressure had been growing on me for years, that it was time somebody made a serious, careful study in this direction to see if they could find anything solid enough on which to put a foot and find it hold. This is the secret of my interest in a year-long investigation in this direction.

Now let us glance at a few of the arguments that you meet, or suggestions that you find, in books, in poems, in sermons,— everywhere; and I grant you they are beautiful, and I grant you they are strong probabilities. They pile up, they accumulate, a hope of immortality. But let us see if we can prove it.

Take, for example, the whole line of analogies that people are constantly following between the dying and the reviving of the vegetable life of the earth. Mrs. Whitney has sung very sweetly, if I can quote one little verse: —

> "God does not send strange flowers every year:
> When the fresh winds blow o'er the pleasant places,
> The same fair flowers lift up the same fair faces,
> The violet is here."

And there is a suggestion in that verse of the continuance of identity through the death of the violet and its reappearance in the coming spring. But the moment you examine it, you see it is only a beautiful illusion. The violet is here, but it is not at all the same violet that was here last year; and in all the æons of earth the same flower has never reappeared. It is no argument whatever, then, that my friend who was here last year is going to reappear in his personal identity to me after the winter we call death. It is a suggestion, a beautiful suggestion; but there is not the slightest

particle of what science demands as evidence anywhere about it.

Take, again, these intuitions that are so strong in our hearts, the feelings we cherish. We say we know certain things intuitively; and that feeling used to be a very strong one to me, until Herbert Spencer, and writers like him, came along, and took away the evidential value of these intuitions, by what was, at least, a very plausible scientific explanation of them. They said, "These intuitions are only the inherited results of the thoughts and the feelings and the fears and the hopes of the human race through countless centuries of the past." I am not sure that Herbert Spencer is right. Unfortunately, however, I am not sure that he is not right. Consequently, I cannot produce one of these intuitional feelings to a man who doubts continued existence and demands evidence of me. He says that is not evidence; and I am obliged to confess that what he says is true.

Then there are thousands of people — I have come in contact with a good many of them — who are satisfied with saying: "I am conscious of immortal life. I am conscious that I am immortal; I feel it, I know it." The magnificent, brave hero Theodore Parker was one of the men who held that position. But, not abating a whit my admiration for Theodore Parker, I cannot but disagree with him at every point here. It seems to me that we cheat ourselves with a misuse of language. What Theodore Parker really meant, and what all people who speak in that way must mean in the ordinary use of the English language, is that they feel very sure, perhaps sure enough for them, as sure as they care to be. They do not mean to be troubled either by doubt or evidence; and they have a perfect right not to be, if that is their feeling. But I submit to you it is a misuse of language for a man to say that he is conscious to-day of a possible future fact. The question as to whether I am immortal is a question as to whether I am going to keep on living after the fact we call death. And, since that

is a fact to be known, to be realized, to be conscious of only when it comes,— to-night or to-morrow or next year or after forty years,— it is simply impossible that a man should be conscious of it now. So again it seems to me that is not quite enough.

There is another point, one side of which perhaps will be entirely new to you and may startle you at first. In most of the letters which I have received this last year the great argument as it was put was simply like this: "I believe in God. Therefore, I believe in a conscious personal existence. I do not believe he has created me for nothing. I do not believe he is going to throw away his own handiwork." That does not satisfy me. I do not believe there is a man on the face of the earth to-day who believes more thoroughly, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, in God than I do; but my belief, my faith, my trust, is not proof, is not demonstration that God either needs me or is going to keep me after a hundred years. I do not know whether he wants me in a thousand years or not. How can I know?

But now I am going to turn the thing right around. And here is a matter which, perhaps, will surprise you. If I were a confirmed atheist, if I believed that there was no God in the universe at all, I should still be just as earnestly and eagerly investigating the question of the immortal life. People seem to assume, the atheists all seem to assume, that, when they have got rid of God, they have also got rid of the question as to whether there can be any future life. I cannot see for an instant why this force, this nature, this machine, this magnificent aggregation, whatever you choose to call it, whether there is any God in it or not, which has brought me here, has brought all of us here, and has put into our hearts all the love and into our brains all the thought and question, has given us consciences, has made us recognize questions of right and wrong, cannot keep me going forever. For, if a force, a universe with God left out,

can do all that has been done, I do not see why it cannot also continue my existence through what is called death. I do not see any negative there that is in the slightest degree a necessity.

So, as I said, I should still be studying the question of continued existence if I believed in no God at all. Belief in God does not seem to me proof of a future life: neither does disbelief in him seem to me disbelief of a future life. I want, at any rate, something beyond either of these.

Then there is one of the grandest arguments that has ever been used, and one that touches me more deeply than almost anything else; and that is the feeling on the part of noble souls that, as things appear to be so unrighteous and so unequal here, there must be a time and place somewhere when accounts will be squared, when the ignorant will have a chance to learn, when the poor and despised will have an opportunity to develop perhaps the sweet and beautiful life that has had no opportunity here. This has been put forth as one of the strongest of all arguments in favor of the future life.

I remember in one place Theodore Parker said that, when he looked upon the pinched, starved face and hungry eyes of a little boy in the slums, he wanted no stronger argument that somewhere in the universe that boy would have a chance. But, unfortunately for the scientific value of an argument like this, I have seen it turned right around; and I have it turned right around in talks with me almost every week. Books have been written in which it is turned right around. If God does not care anything about the little boy in the slums to-day, and does not see that he gets any chance or any justice, how do you happen to know that he cares for him at all or ever will care for him? That is the way a great many people argue. They say, "How do you happen to feel sure that the God who seems to neglect this world, and does not care anything about it, is suddenly going to be very careful and see that every one gets his rights in some other world?"

So you see that at least, when a man flings that in your face, it is not always perfectly easy to answer him.

I believe myself it is a tremendous probability in favor of the future life; but, when a man comes to me, and says, I think it is a tremendous probability against the justice of God right here and now, I need to go further than reasserting my original opinion, before I can satisfy him or do away with his opposition.

Then there are lives that never seem to be treated justly here; not only crime prosperous and rich, and spattering its mud on our poorer clothes as it sweeps along the avenue, — not only this, which has been a problem to every thoughtful man in all ages, — but there are lives which we know are never finished. They have infinite possibilities in them that they have no chance here to unfold; and it does seem as though God would, God must, some time, somewhere, give these people a chance. Let me read you just a few words from Victor Hugo: —

"For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose, verse, history, philosophy, drama, romance, satire, ode, song. I have tried all; but I feel I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave, I can say, like so many others, 'I have finished my day's work'; but I cannot say I have finished my life. My day's work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley: it is a thoroughfare, — it closes in the twilight to open with the dawn."

But let me anticipate enough right here to say that this was not the prime reason for Hugo's belief. Hugo had been a searcher for years in the realm of psychic phenomena, and had come to feel that the matter for him had been demonstrated. This was known to all his friends, so that this — beautiful outburst as it is — is not the principal proof that Hugo would have given you in conversation. But it is a tremendous probability.

Among the many beautiful letters that I received during

the last week — and let me say, in spite of the kind I received the week before, they are almost all beautiful that have come to me this week — was one from a widowed mother, who is practically left to a lonely life, and who writes: "I long so much to have this matter proved. It seems to me the one theme of any importance. My husband died ten years ago; and my life stopped ten years ago. It seems to me as though there must be somewhere a time and place where this broken life can begin again."

And so I suppose all of us say. You never yet saw an author who had written what he regarded as the grandest thing he intended to write; you never saw a painter or sculptor who did not look upon all his attempts as suggestions merely of what he might do, if only he had the time and a chance. Every person who ever wrote a book has dreamed a hundred more beautiful than ever he succeeded in getting on paper; and, if the universe is just, if the universe cares, if it means something, it does seem as though there would be a chance for some of these things to be finished some time, somewhere.

I feel, as I look upon any man or woman with noble qualities of brain and heart, and see him or her nearing the line of the silence, as though I were looking upon a ship a hundred miles from the sea. I feel as though he or she was not built for simply that: it suggests to me an ocean sweeping round a planet, with the infinite winds in the sails and the infinite stars overhead. So this to my mind is a tremendous probability. I look upon a child as I look upon a little plant in a hothouse. I know that, if this plant grows, it must be either taken out of doors or else it will burst through the roof: it has in it potentialities greater than the hothouse which contains it for a time. So I feel concerning every human soul I come in contact with,— there must be some larger place than this, some grander place for these magnificent possibilities to come to blossom and fruitage. It is a tremendous probability in favor of another life; but I do not quite know.

I see a beautiful oak beginning to grow, reaching a height of ten feet. If it has a chance and time, it will live to be a hundred; and its branches will spread their shade for many yards in every direction. An accident comes: the little oak is knocked over and torn from its roots; and I know that is the end of it. That oak again is never to have any chance to complete itself; and when I get humble, as I ought to be all the time, I find myself wondering why I cherish the conceit that a power that can create souls by the million should feel under any special necessity of going back after I have been run over to pick me up and reinstate just me. While it is a magnificent probability, it is not demonstration; and I want something more. I am not sure that in my lifetime I shall ever get what all will accept as demonstration. I want it; and I cannot understand the state of mind and heart of any one who does not want it.

I come now to a point which seems to me as probability stronger than any I have touched upon. I have shown in the course of sermons which I have preached that there never has been a time on the face of the earth in any religion when the majority of the people did not believe that they were going to live after the fact called death. The age-long and universal fact of this belief is the thing I would have you consider for a moment. If there is no reason in it, no basis for it, no realization of such a promise, why should the universe from the very beginning lie to its child man? Why fool us with such a promise? Why bend down over us with its beautiful sky and clouds and the whisper of the winds and the music of the brooks, and whisper to us ever,

"There is no death. What seems so is transition"?

If it is not true, how does it happen that the universe in all ages should have been saying It is true, to the heart of man? It seems to me that we may consider ourselves in a sort of fashion as standing related to the universe about us

as a coin is related to a die. You pick up a clean, fresh twenty-dollar gold piece, and examine it; and you feel perfectly certain that for every mark you find on the gold piece there will be something corresponding in the die. Have we not a right to feel that we as men and women are the products of this universe in some such vital sense as that; so that whatever you find universal in all the lives that have ever been, in all the hearts that have ever felt and in all the brains that have ever thought,— you feel here is something which corresponds to the die, a reality in the universe that pressed upon and shaped us what we are?

It seems to me that this is one of the most magnificent arguments with which I am familiar; and yet somebody might tell me that Nature, in most cases from the beginning of the world, has been telling us things that were not quite true, that we have had to correct Nature's impressions from the very beginning, finding out generally that they were wrong. Some extreme doubter might meet us with a point like this; and we should at least be a little discouraged, and wish we had something stronger to say.

Then there is still one more argument, and this,— let us say it in spite of all the scepticism and agnosticism that have come out of modern science,— however we may be impressed by the worldly tradition, the materialistic tendencies and qualities of modern science, this is a gift of science,— and what is it? — the death of materialism. The Church from the very beginning has hurled her anathemas and thundered her anger against materialism; but the Church from the very beginning until to-day has never hurt a hair of it. Materialism has lived and flourished as intelligence flourished, grown as knowledge grew, until these modern days it threatens to overcome the world. But the scientific men themselves have carried their studies so far as to learn that they cannot explain the universe and man on the theory of materialism; and so you will find a man like Huxley facing every fact, ready to give up anything that he could not prove, and even

saying that it was immoral to hold beliefs that could not be proved scientifically,— and I am inclined to agree with him, — we find a man like Huxley, who says, " If I am compelled to choose between the materialism of a man like Büchner," whom I quoted the other Sunday as saying that thought was a product of the brain, just as bile was a product of the liver, " and the idealism of Berkeley," who believed, as Christian Science teaches to-day, that all material things are mere temporary illusion, " I should have to agree with Berkeley." This is where science has come. He does not, by the way, agree with either of them: neither do I, which is not saying much after Huxley. I do not believe either of them is true; but materialism as an accepted theory of the universe is killed, it is no longer decent science nor good philosophy. No man who holds any high rank in the scientific world to-day believes that thought is a product merely of the molecular movements of the brain. Tyndall, who came as near being a materialist as any famous man of modern times, said though there was always a correspondence between the molecular movements of the brain and the thought that accompanied those movements, yet the gulf of separation between them was just as impassable to-day as it was in the savage periods of the history of the world. And, when you have proved beyond question that mind, feeling, love,— these things,— are infinitely more than planets, than stars, that they rule the world, are the mightiest powers on the face of the earth, you have gone a good ways towards proving that they can get along without matter; but, unfortunately again, simply that demonstration does not prove continued existence.

I may know that mind is more than matter; that my brain, that can measure the sun, is unspeakably grander than any sun that shines in the deeps of space. I may know that that sun is going to cease to exist. How? Cease to exist as a sun. But there is not a single particle of its matter, not a particle of its accompanying force, that is going to

cease to exist. So I may prove that my mind is mightier than the sun, and prove that mind or its elements are going to exist uncounted ages; but that does not prove, I must confess, that conscious personal existence of this same mind is going to continue forever.

Half the human race, nearly, believes to-day that mind is everything and matter is illusion; and yet at the same time it as universally denies the conscious personal existence of the soul. So that the two do not necessarily go together, and believing one is not quite enough to prove the other.

Now I have one point more with which to tax your patience, and this is more impressive to my thinking than any of the others with which I have yet dealt; and that is the drama of this universe,— how it started, how far it has got, and what the probable outcome of it is to be on the theory that the universe is sane.

Let us go back so many million years that there is no use of even trying to count them for the moment, to a time when the whole of space that is now occupied by any part of the universe that we can investigate with our largest telescopes was fire-mist, chaotic, containing neither planet nor sun, nor satellite of any kind. The whole space filled with a mist so heated that there were none of the minutest particles of it that were in contact with each other, a gas so tenuous that it never could be investigated. Then millions of years rolled away, the fire-mist moves and starts up centres of rotation; and by and by you have somewhere in the midst of it a nebula, or nebulæ, which is only a thicker condensation of the fire-mist, but with perhaps a centre a little more dense than the outermost parts. The motion goes on; by and by the centre separates itself from the outermost parts by its greater rapidity of motion, and so flings off a ring,— such a ring as you may discover around Saturn to-day. This ring cools, breaks, its parts tumble together, and by their rotation assume the form of a sphere and begin their motion around the greater central mass. The central mass flings

off another ring, and that falls into fragments and coheres into another sphere, and the central mass flings off another ring. This is a process, they tell us, that had been going on in the formation of our little solar system, the outer ones flung off first and then another and another, until we got down to our little earth, which in the process of its cooling threw off a ring which condensed and made our moon.

Now, after thousands of years had gone by, this little earth of ours became cool enough so that certain kinds of life could live upon it in the ooze by the water's edge,— certain kinds of fish, little tiny plants, little tiny animals or animalculæ; and the process of cooling and of the evolution of life and its climbing from the lower forms to the higher went on. We have the fishes, the reptiles, and the birds, then mammals, all the gigantic animals, then come forests, and then, at last, a feeble sort of being that did not know it was man, that we now call by that name,— feebler than almost all the other animals of its size. There had been a marvellous development of the brain; and, though it was weaker than almost all its enemies, it began to have the power to outwit its enemies, out-know, out-think them. Under the form of cunning it developed an ability to master the rest of the world. Then this cunning developed into the higher form of intellect, which ruled mankind. Then this animal developed something higher than intellect,— the power to love, and, out of love, conscience; and this strange creature became a moral being. And then out of the moral being, and beyond it, began to appear a spiritual nature.

Remember, then, there was a time when the mightiest power on the face of the earth was muscle; then there came a time when the mightiest power was a cunning that could outwit muscle; then a time of a higher form of intellect, which was superior to muscle or cunning; then love and a conscience, which was mightier than they, until to-day, in spite of all the evil that there is in the world, the

mightiest power on the face of the earth is the moral ideal. The Czar of Russia, the Emperor of Germany, the Queen of England dare not go to war without appealing to the conscience of mankind, and claiming that the war is right and just. The moral ideal, then, in spite of what you may think this old world to be, is the mightiest power on the planet.

Now the next step, the next logical, natural step, seems to me to be a development of the spiritual nature, provided man is a spiritual being, as I think we shall undoubtedly prove before we are through. If you had been present when cunning was beginning to outwit muscle, there was a long period of time when it would have been a question with you as to which would have come out ahead in this age-long battle. For you must not think these battles were decided in a year or a century. It was hundreds of thousands of years that this process had been going on.

Suppose you had been present when one of these transition times was taking place. What would you have found? You would have found here and there sporadic manifestations of the higher life, merely a promise, of the kind that makes you think of spring when you see the early buds. But there may come a storm, and all the blossoms be hidden after that. So you never would have been certain as to how long this process had been taking place.

So we are to-day in regard to scientific study. The four thousand years of the world that we can clearly claim to be historical when compared with the time of the human race on this planet is not an hour in a day: it is rather one hour perhaps in a week. Is it not perfectly natural, then, that, beginning with the first we know of our human history, there should have been spasmodic, sporadic manifestations of what we call the spiritual nature of man, breaking through the guise of flesh; that there should now and then, if we are whelmed and surrounded in a spirit world, appear a face, as in a glimpse, a voice be heard, a hand felt by some one more

psychically sensitive than ordinary? Is not this just what on that theory you would have expected? Is not that the kind of progress of the world Paul outlines, when he says, "First the blade, and then the ear, and then" — away after that — "the full corn in the ear"?

In other words, as an evolutionist, first, last, and all the time an evolutionist, I believe that we are to-day beginning to have manifestations of a new and higher, a more spiritual, type of man that ought to be precisely what we should be looking for. The world is getting ripe for it. We are on the edge of it; and I believe with my whole soul that it will not be long before immortality will be as much discovered as America was discovered by Columbus. These spasmodic manifestations that have been seen, and heard and felt in all religions, in all races, for the last three or four thousand years, are just the first little blossoms of spring, frost-nipped, trodden under foot and forgotten; but they have been prophecy, and the prophecy of that which I believe is to come.

Father, we thank Thee for these magnificent hopes that have cheered us on during the early twilight of the history of the race, the glimpses and gleams of the rising sun; but we thank Thee more for the belief that the sun itself is really going to rise, and there is going to be a day of hope, a day of peace, a day of brotherhood, a day of such knowledge as shall make the hardships of life seem only the passing pains of an hour. For this we thank Thee. Amen.

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EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

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ROOT AND FLOWER.

"Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth by itself alone; but, if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

"He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."— JOHN xii. 24, 25.

I WENT once to see an old friend in the country, who consecrated his life to trees and flowers; and, when I came away, he gave me something wrapped in a piece of paper, bidding me select the best spot in my garden, when I got home, and plant it. "For," he added, "that is a very choice flower, sir, one of the most beautiful things you ever saw in your life." So I left my friend, and started home; and, when I had got well out of his sight, of course I undid the paper, that I might look at my treasure. It was as queer, unpromising a thing to look at as ever I saw. At the first glance, you would take it for a haggard old onion. There was not a speck of beauty about it, that I should desire it. Then I put my flower back into the paper, brought it home, and planted it just as I was directed; and, when I had done this, I began to ponder and wonder over this great mystery of planting, growing, and flowering. I said: What are my conceptions of what is to come out of my dark, forbidding bulb? I never saw the flower, I suppose, in my life. I have no certain idea what it is like. It may resemble a sunflower or a peony, or a daisy or a bluebell.

If I carry a single tooth pried out of the limestone to a man like Professor Owen, he will sketch me an outline of the animal, though this may be the first fragment ever seen of a thing that died out ten thousand years before the first man.

But I may carry a fragment of this root to the Owen of plants, if there be one, and ask him to search for the flower; and I suppose he must fail to tell me what it will be, because there seems to be no possible link between the bare grain and the body as it pleases God. And, then, this choicest spot in the garden,— what did my friend mean by that? If I understand him, he meant a place of the strongest possible contrasts, a place bare to the sun and the night, the wind and the rain; where I had gathered the heaviest proportion of shard, refuse, and decay; a place where life has to do battle with darkness and death, and to draw from them its richest elements of beauty and perfume.

And, then, what have I done? My friend gave me this flower, as he called it, folded carefully as if it were a jewel of price; and, carefully as he gave it, I brought it home. But, when I got home, I put it down into this grim earth, this fragment of the measureless waste of land, and left it there.

Had I not better keep it in some safe casket, or fold it to my heart, until I see the beauty that my friend has promised? Is it possible, is it indispensable in that will of God which I have been taught to call the order of nature, that the only way to come at the beauty and glory is this,— that it shall be put away and buried out of my sight? Can it be true that the way to find what I want is to lose it, and that the transcendent form, color, and perfume of August must depend upon the decay of June?

These are some of the questionings that whispered themselves out of my poor dry root; and I could give them but one answer, namely: These seeming contradictions are only so because I do not know enough. And I can only know as I walk by faith; for faith, above all things, makes the discords of the present the harmonies of the future.

It is one of the many curious things, again, that look out at us from almost every page of the Gospels, to assure us the Gospels themselves are substantially fragments out of the

real life and times of Jesus, that these men who had come to the feast at Jerusalem, and requested to see him, should be Greeks, at that time probably the most inquisitive and newsy race on the earth. They had come, I presume, from Corinth or Ephesus; and, when they went back home, the first question would be, What's the news? Now the news then was Jesus: his name and fame had gone out into all Jewry. He was the common subject of discussion in the city gates and synagogues; and it would be a great thing for them, when they got back home, to say, We have seen Jesus, and talked with him. And the answer of Christ to their request, though it seems at the first glance to be no answer at all, touches the very heart of all such questions and answers, and is, besides that, a beautiful instance of the transcendental nature of this Son of God: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but, if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." As if he would say: These men want to see me; but what can they gain by that? There is nothing to see in me. If they want to see me, they must wait until I go away, and the world sees me no more. What they will see now is not me. The root is not the flower. This common, foot-sore man, with this poor brown face, so thin and worn that men think I may be nearly fifty, while I am still but thirty,— what can I be to men whose ideal is Apollo? I cannot sing with Homer, I cannot speculate with Plato, I cannot unloose the seals with Euclid, or bear men on the mighty tides of eloquence with Demosthenes. Phidias made the marble speak, Apelles made the canvas glow: I made ploughs and carts and ox-yokes and stools. They cannot see *me.* My simple words about God and man, and duty and destiny, would be foolishness to them. Let them wait until the world burns with the lustre of what has sprung out of me. When I have risen, and stand with the martyr in the fire; when I shine in the Catacombs until there is no need of the sun; when I have whispered my comfort and confidence to millions of desolate souls, who are now

and will be looking at what seems to them the fearful vacancy of the hereafter; when I have created new homes for purity and peace to dwell in, and brought men and women and children back to the divine will; when the love and truth and self-sacrifice of which God has made me, though I seem but a poor peasant, shall have done what all the genius of all the ages has failed to do; when I have hushed the fevered heart of the world to rest, and quickened it into a new life,— then they can see me. But I must die to live. The burial comes, then the resurrection. I must be absent as a root, or I can never be present as a flower.

Such, as I understand it, is the meaning folded, not only in my text, but also in the richest life of the world. Just as this most celestial soul was folded in a life about which there is a very early application of those old prophecies of some chosen one who should be as a root out of dry ground, whose face should be marred more than that of any man, who should have no form nor comeliness, so that, when men saw him, there should be no beauty, that they should desire him; and as God cast him, so folded, into the place which, of all others at that time, held the heaviest proportion of shard and refuse hastening to decay,— cast him into that place as the choicest spot in the garden of the world,— and then, by sunlight and darkness, dryness and rain, life and death, wrought out his purpose, until the flower came, in the full time, to fill the world with wonder and blessing,— so it will be with God's best blossom and fruit forever and ever more.

So the world bends with infinite tenderness over the story of that woman who had no beauty and no blessing, out on the Yorkshire moors. We pity her for the dismal, scrawny school of her childhood, where food for the outer and the inner life was alike hard and mouldy. We pity her for the lonely drudgery, so hapless and so hopeless, out in Brussels, as we see her sit down to it, while her wings bleed beating the bars of her cage, and the music soars within her,

"And the life still drags her downward
To its level, day by day,
What is fine within her growing
Coarse to sympathize with clay."

Our lips tremble as we see that striving after some touch of grace and beauty to deck the hard, gray home, though it embody itself in no better thing than a bright little frock and a pair of tiny red shoes; yet to see the poor blossom of grace and beauty shrivelling in the fire, put there and held there by a father harder than the home!

We watch her, a woman while yet a child,—a woman, because other little children, still more helpless, are motherless, and can find no other nature large enough to take them in and understand and adopt them; a sister in all sweet, ingenuous, simple ways, a mother in all wise, overbending care and love, and then, at last, a woman grown, walking over great stretches of wild country, that she might be alone with that other Father and Mother of us all, and gather strength and courage from the communion to go back and bear her burden of a stern, half-mad father, a reckless, lost brother, and a bare, rugged life. Then we say, Why was not such a soul clothed in the beauty of Juno, and born in the vale of Tempe, in the golden days, the first-born and nursling of a queen? But we say this no longer when the flower unfolds to the sun,—when her books and her life in all their variant strength and fulness reveal the mystery of the homely enfolding, the rank, sharp contrasts of the garden-plat and the hot days and dark nights; for we see in the flower, brimming with refreshment and blessing to thousands, how not to the beauty of the goddess, not to the flowery meadows and bosky dells of Arcadia, not to the first-born and nursling of a queen, could this power come, but to such a soul, set in such a place, to battle through and gather all the influences of such a life.

And so, again, dear, quaint, loving Charles Lamb flowered out of the sharp contrasts of Fleet Street and

the India House, and that other influence and element of bitterness almost too terrible to mention. No man who has been touched by the sweet beauty and humor of "Elia" and the "Letters" can realize readily how it is that this airy, sprightly, and most genial soul could gather such nurture in the shadows of Christ's Hospital and the eternal dust and din of London. One imagines that the endless drudgery of the desk, and the shadow of a home where no face of wife or child ever lighted at the sound of his footstep, ought to have withered him up; and so it ought, but for one thing that flashes down into the mystery, and, besides the fact of his endowment, solves the problem.

When Charles Lamb was a young man, standing at the portals of life, with that rich nature beating in his heart, his sister Mary, in a sudden passion of insanity, did the most awful deed daughter can do to mother. Then, when the dust was given to the dust, this young man said, If I remain as I am, and make my sister a home, there may be months or years at a time when she can live with me in freedom and comfort; but, if I put her away, there can be no future for her but the asylum all the days of her life. Then the young man buried his rich nature in the soil of that home. And in all his life he never told the world what he had done. Revealing himself so frankly in all besides, there is no hint of that revelation which might open all the rest. He buried his life. And, were we ignorant of this great law of what is rich soil to a noble root, we would say, Now he will wither away and die. But God brings out of that burial a flower whose perfume and beauty charms the world. Had he saved his life, it may be he had lost it; but because he gave his life he saved it. Because he went into darkness, he sprang into the light. He rose because he was buried, and his uttermost loss became his most transcendent gain.

There is nothing more touching to me in all literature, again, than those poems and letters of Burns that reveal to

us this great fact of adverse influences perfecting the divine purpose. We hear eminent critics deplore the fact that Burns wasted his powers. They say he ought to have written an epic. Burns did write an epic; and the subject was the battle of a soul with its physical, social, and spiritual adversaries,— an epic perhaps the most significant that ever was written. His whole life, and every line in his poems, blend together to make it; and it trembles all over with this truth of a life found in the losing and lost in the finding. Born in the worst period and place of a fossilized Calvinism, he drew from that very fossil the richest nurture of a broad and catholic trust in the Infinite Love. Living where a free expression of opinion in religious speculation was counted atheism, and in politics treason, the very bonds that were laid on his soul to keep him down quickened him into some of the deepest and grandest utterances for freedom that ever rang through the world. Taught from his cradle that our human nature is utterly abhorrent and bad, the angels trust not each other with a more perfect trust than that which filled his soul toward humanity. Loving as few men ever loved, fewer ever told, as he did, what love can do to lift a man near to heaven or to sink him into a great deep. No man ever painted such an interior as the "Cotter's Saturday Night" or by implication called such solemn penalties upon his own soul for causing the mother to weep and the father to hang his head in such a place.

And out of that bitter time and place, with that passionate, sinful, sorrowful nature, the result of the life, in the whole breadth of it, remains one of the richest flowers that ever blossomed on the world. A Scottish peasant, deplorably poor, he left the world richer beyond all price. Born into the lap of a grim and forbidding time, the time was glorified by his birth. More selfish than most sinners, he was more unselfish than almost any saint. And well he might have cried out: Let no man look at me who wants to see

me, or try to find the result of my life by the measure of what he sees. I shall die, broken down by poverty and sorrow and sin; but I shall rise again, lead captivity captive, and receive gifts for men. Old sectarian antagonisms will forget to be hard and unmerciful as they hear me pleading, and the fires of a nobler political faith glow forever in the words I have uttered of the rights of man. Men shall look more frankly into each other's faces when they hear me cry, "A man's a man for a' that," and the atheist gulp down his sneer as he ponders over my rebuke. My better nature shall make good men better, my wild cries for pardon teach the sinner afresh the curse of sin. My life was lost, that it might be found. I died, that I might bear much fruit.

Now I have mentioned these representative lives bearing on different sides of the thought before us, in order that you may see by these examples how I want to urge upon you the fact that this clear and steady insight into the correspondence between nature in the plant and nature in the man, which comes out so constantly in the teachings of Christ, is weighted with a deep meaning, and is forever open to suggest rich lessons for the soul.

And this first of all: that this present, personal-bounded life is but faintly understood, it is so poor in comparison with what shall come out of it, if we are steady to its great central purpose.

My shrivelled bulb, darkling there under the soil; this homely, near-sighted woman, sneering at the "Methodies"; this poor stuttering London clerk, watching his sometimes insane sister; this Ayrshire peasant, whose highest preferment was to be a gauger, and whose heart exulted because he had "dinnered wi' a lord,"— a lord whose only hope of being remembered now on this earth lies in that single dinner; this peasant man of Galilee, whose very brothers did not believe in him,— all these instances strike the truth home that we see but a poor hint now of the glory resting on our life, to be discovered when that life shall be made perfect.

That man walking over the hills of Jewry in the old time was no more like our Christ and Son of God, if you had seen him, than the May root is like the August flower. That quiet woman, before she wrote "Jane Eyre," was no more to the world than the woman hidden to-day in our prairies or backwoods, who shall yet reveal herself and be central to the world. Charles Lamb and Robert Burns, could they come back, would find nations waiting to do them homage on the very spot where they felt most deeply the bitterness of neglect. And this, not so much because the world was blind to their beauty as that this beauty had not yet flowered out.

They died, "not having received the promise, but seeing it afar off; God having reserved some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

Then there is this lesson,—that those very elements of decay and death we fear will hinder, to the true soul will not hinder, but help; nay, be vital and essential to the great purpose for which that soul came, and to which it tends.

I know of nothing more fatal, in all outward seeming, than Jewry to Christ, Ayrshire to Burns, and Fleet Street to Lamb, and Haworth to Charlotte Brontë. If God, in every one of these instances, had revealed to me the conditional as the root of the resulting life, I think I should have besought him to alter the decision, and not plant such holy and noble natures in such a dismal soil; while the place I should have chosen, had it been left to me, would probably be as if I had kept the root my friend gave me safely locked in my desk, never thinking how it is out of the very contest with these antagonisms that the choicest power and grace must spring,—as the farce of saying mass by the scented priests in Rome made Luther say it with a deeper reverence and more anxious searching for its grace. But, above all, may we not see this greatest lesson,—that more profit comes to the soul, and all related to it, out of separation and darkness and death, in God's good time,

than can ever come out of union and light and life? "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but, if it die, it will bring forth much fruit."

I suppose no men that ever lived would be more ready than these apostles to say, We grant this, if you mean a grain of wheat; but we cannot see it, if you mean the life of a man. Yet they themselves were to furnish one of the most striking applications of the fact ever found in human history.

While the Messiah was with them, they blundered over his sayings, hesitated whether they could go with him, held a divided love, and saw through a glass darkly, as I saw the August flower in the root of June. But, when he died and was gone, then he came back to them in all his glory and power. When they had lost him, and darkness and death had taken him seemingly into their heart, then came the resurrection. Every word he had said became radiant with tenderness and truth and love. His deeds caught a new meaning. His life filled before them into an ever-growing wonder; and he was transfigured forever, not to three men, but to the universe. Then, as the great memories filled them, their sense grew ever clearer of what their Friend had been; but even that, at last, was lost in the sense of what he was.

So they loved him, and labored and lived and died for him, and, when their time came, went singing, with a most glorious and transcendent exultation, into the shadow of death, because his light, shining through the shadow, goldened all the way.

Now this is where the truth comes most urgently home to every one of us. The time comes again and again when we must bury the best we have, and leave it in the soil,— sever some precious belonging of life for duty, with Lamb, or find sin or circumstance, sever it with Burns. The prime condition of a life ever found is a life ever lost.

But there are times when we all feel poor and bare and

sad for our losses, and wonder whether it was not all wrong when the treasure was taken away. I tell you, if we are poor because we stand true to life and duty, we are poor only as the sower is poor because he has to cast his wheat into the furrow and then wait for the sheaves of harvest, poor as I was poor because my flower root was not treasured where it would remain as it was, but was cast where a life was waiting to receive and re-create it, as true in its way and mighty as the life of the first archangel.

Our poverty, then, is our wealth; and our loss, our gain. If our life is as God will, yet is bare, it is only as the granary is bare in June. That bareness is the prophecy of plenty; and fulness alone in June might bring grave reason to fear that there might be sparseness and hunger in January.

When I sow my good treasure broadcast, as Christ did; when I give myself with what I am giving,— then, as the earth never fails of her harvest, but in the Old World or the New will surely bring us our daily bread, so the soul can never fail of her divine returns. Here or yonder, in the full time comes the full blessing,— the flower flashing out glory, the fields laughing with plenty.

> "Then who can murmur and misdoubt,
> When God's great bounty finds him out?"

And just as I can gather and deepen this faith, as I can realize, though I have never seen, the beauty of my August, I shall be ready to plant my root, to let my wheat fall into the ground and die, to give my life. Our great temptation is to hold on to the seed-corn. We are in agony because of the sowing. When the angel comes and takes our treasure, we say we will go, that we may die also. But the hand so masterful and yet so gentle takes our treasure, and casts it into its grave; and then the hope and love and life of our life is dead.

Dead, did I say? What means this story of the spring and summer? Is not every day proclaiming through all the land, then, that what was seeming death is unconquerable life? Death has no dominion. Death is lost in victory. The resurrection comes while I am going to look at the grave and weep there, and count my losses and recount my poverty. And then the shining ones tell me the great secret, and send me on my way, lost in wonder and solemn joy.

Why, then, will men not take these things into their hearts, and be as full of faith in the meaning and purpose of their lives as of their flowers? Is the man alone the neglected step-child? Are his fortunes alone misfortunes? Are we much less than the lilies? Or is it not true of all things true that, as man rises nearest of all on this earth to the image of the Infinite, so he is nearest of all on this earth to the Providence that enfolds and blesses all?

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BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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"Some great cause, God's new Messiah"

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THE JOY OF YOUTH

BY

Rev. ROBERT COLLYER

GEO. H. ELLIS
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

Owing to a second attack of Grippe, Dr. Savage has been unable to preach for the last two Sundays; but he expects to finish his series on "Immortality" in May.

THE JOY OF YOUTH.

"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth!"—ECCLES. xi. 9.

WE may fairly assume that the preacher is thinking of youth as a quality rather than a time in our life, in the last part of this sad sermon. And, when he has called up the memories of his own lost youth, as I take it, he draws a picture of his old age, drifting slowly down to death, thinks of what he was then and what he is now, and cries, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth!" In the clear glance of the eye of it and the sure tramp of the foot, in the healthy sleep which comes then, and the cheerful waking, in the unworn power of it and the steady nerve, and in its sunny hopes and expectations. Rejoice in thy youth; for the time is coming to you which has come to me, when your eyes will grow dim and desire fail, when you will wake up at the twitter of the sparrow to long and dreary days, and your life will be no longer like an April day in which sunshine chases shadow, but like the setting in of winter when the clouds return after the rain.

And I suppose few men have ever lived who could say such words as these with a deeper insight of their truth than this sad old king. His own life opened with as fair a promise and was filled with a joy as fine as ever fell to the lot of a young man in any age or country. His father was a poet, a warrior, and a king; a man who had struck the harp to deathless numbers, touched the national banner with a new glory, and given an enduring splendor to the throne. His father's son was the darling of the nation, once in the first fair prime of his days, with a treasury full of gold and silver, with councillors full of wisdom, with a

keen and eager heart for what we have come to call the true, the beautiful, and the good; and with all this, in these early times, a simple and humble reliance on God worthy the soul of a saint.

Well, about forty years pass away, as nearly as we can guess; and then he writes this sermon, as the traditions run, one of the saddest that ever came out of the human heart. His joy has vanished: knowledge has eaten the heart out of his faith; and we hear no more of the prayers which rise with such an exquisite grace from the youth who would always wait on God for direction and trust him for wisdom. Superstition has set up her idols where religion built her altars, and a brooding sadness has taken the place of the old strong joy. The judgment of earth and heaven has gone against him in these forty years, and he knows that better than any other living man; and so he moans, as he opens his great sad sermon, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

But now, as he draws to his conclusion, he pulls himself together, as we say, and says: *No*, that is not true. Ruined as I am, and base, I will not lie to my own soul. Some things are not vanity, after all; and one of these is the lost youth I have been looking at through the glass of time. Vanity has come out of my manhood; but God gave me that youth for as lovely a verity as his hand ever made, and I alone have to answer for turning the fruit of it to ashes on the lips of my old age. I must not go back on that fair vision. I cannot be such an utter fool as to call white black. I know it was bright and good, and all the more I know it when I think of what I was and what I am. That glory on the face of Nature, then, was the true revelation of her life: this gray monotony is only her shroud.

That joy of my youth, in which I went and came, slept and woke, planned and wrought, and sang out of my heart as a bird sings; the love with which I loved one woman for love's sake, saw myself in the eyes of her children, made

my home beautiful and clean, and the power by which I kept order to the utmost line of my kingdom,— these were all good and true, and will be, though I should die crying, There is no God. It is no proof that these gifts were not good, because evil has come in their wake to one poor old man; and so the youth of the world shall know, from one who can tell the story from the heart of a sore and sad experience, how the way opens here toward glory or shame. Therefore, "rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and the sight of thine eyes: but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

But, if the preacher had said no such word as this of the joy there is in a fresh young life, clean and pure as his own was once, the loss would have only lain in his sermon. Because to rejoice in our youth, no matter what we may say who mourn after "the tender light of a day that is dead," is as natural as it is for the land to rejoice in the May sun, the birds in their building and brooding, and all things that run and fly in the outbreak of their imprisoned instincts when life rises to spring-tide.

There is a lovely chapter to be read between the lines in the early history of New England, of the way the youth there fought for its innocent and harmless joy against the stern and austere rule of the elder men and ministers, who had come to look on such things as quite beneath the heed of immortal souls that were trying to solve the problems of "providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate." The joy will break out all the same into the bloom of a new ribbon or vest; into profane music by and by, and the singing of old ballads under the breath; and into stolen walks of a young man and maid on a Sunday before sundown, that they may tell the old sweet story to each other, when they ought to be hearing the minister holding forth on the wrath of God; in junketings, again, as time went on, and even a dance at

some outlying farm, where the farmer and his wife of the later emigration held on to the cheerful traditions of the old motherland, thought no harm of innocent amusements, and so would risk a good deal, that the young folks might be young.

The masters of the strongholds of the stern Puritan spirit could never prevent these outbreaks of the joy of youth, any more than they could prevent the purple and gold on the breast of the doves or the song of the birds in the elms or the rush of the spring floods, and for very much the same reason. It was spring with those they would affront. Nature was bidding them rejoice in many ways the ministers and selectmen could not or would not understand, and so it was like trying to fight the rainbow.

Nor, at a later day, could the Society of Friends master these joyous instincts and outbreaks, whether they took these lighter forms or the lofty forms of poetry and music; for, when Nature says one thing, and even what we may call religion another, and the law of the church or the sect crosses that of "all out doors," you need not ponder the question as to which is bound to win in the long fight, — the law laid down by Calvin, Roger Williams, George Fox, or John Wesley, on the one hand, or this joy of youth, on the other, pulsing through the heart of the new generation. Only the immutable can stand, and this joy is immutable as the light of heaven; and so those who would fight it in any innocent form it may choose to take have first to settle the question whether they are not fighting against God.

I would say, then, it is no use asking whether this man was wise or a fool for obeying this instinct of his youth to rejoice in what was within and all about him. His joy in books and music, in making fair gardens, and in collecting rare treasures of art; in his wife and children, his home, temple, and government, and in wit and humor,— for, Hebrew as he was, he must have had some turn that way, or he could never have solved that problem of the two mothers,

in which one detects a grain of both, — these in themselves were not the wayward freaks of a young man's folly. They were good, true things in their degree then, as they are now, — not vanities, but verities, I say, and not things well used that would make a man wish he was dead and done with it all. They were, indeed, the very same things Sydney Smith, a wiser man than Solomon, found among the joys of his youth, and good to him still, and true, when he wrote to a friend: "I am seventy-four years old, and am, upon the whole, a happy man. I have found this an interesting world to live in, and am thankful to Providence for my lot." A wiser man than Solomon, I say again, in despite of the catechism; for in the crucible of the one life you find dust and ashes when old age draws on, and in the other the fine gold of gratitude and a sweet content.

Now, then, where shall we look for the reasons which turned a youth of pure sweetness to an old age of gall? and how came that which began in hope to end in despair? And I answer, In this first of all: that in the eager hunger of his youth and the pushing-out of his genius he tried to do too many things to do any one supremely well, so that, while the idea of the way each one ought to be done held itself high and clear in his soul, the doing fell so far short of it as to leave a sense of failure in the whole endeavor.

In this, so far, however, I think he was not to blame: it is the fault, but not the sin, of youth to be stricken with the fever of untried powers, and to feel as I remember I felt when I was let loose for the first time to browse in a great library. There were so many books I wanted to read that night came on, and I had not read a whole chapter in any one of them; and something like this was the trouble with this young man. Perhaps he might have sung psalms equal to those of his royal father, he only sang the Song of Solomon; or prophesied, but he only preached, and collected proverbs. In some one thing, or it may be more than one, he might have flamed out into a supreme excellence.

He flatted out into a few degrees above commonplace; and the best thing he has left us — this sad sermon — is, in some sense, the worst. It was with him, indeed, as someone has said it was with Brougham, who also came to something like our Preacher's spirit in his old age: "He could have done any one of ten things better than any other man in England, but he insisted on doing the whole ten." Now do we wonder over Scheffer's "Faust and Margaret"? He wrought thirty years of his life into those wonderful designs. Or over Mozart's music? "If few have equalled me in my art," he said, "fewer still have studied it with such untiring zeal."

And here, to my mind, is one root of this young man's trouble. The joy of youth was in him, and pricked him on to try this and that; but, king as he was, he could not command the perfection his soul called for, because he would not pay the price old Carlyle told the young men in Glasgow he had always paid for any worthy work he had ever done,— hard, stern labor, which had made him actually sick in his body, so ruthless was the soul of him to do it well.

No such ruthlessness touches us in this young king. It is an amateur and dilettante way he has of doing things in those days, if the Song of Songs gives us any insight of his methods.

And so it is that, as we only get out of any endeavor a worth in proportion to that we put into it, we are not to wonder that he should cry at last, "What has a man of all his labor under the sun?" For this gradual selection of some one thing to do and to be is pretty sure to lead a young man on to the second line this man failed to reach, and, in failing there, drifted on to the third and last; and that is the sacredness which invests any worthy work in the end, so that this shall not be one thing and your religion another, but, as the good Methodist woman said she never missed the corners in sweeping a room when she said that Scripture, "Create in me a clean heart, O God!" so you shall

find that your work and your religion always meet and tie. "I keep up my heart," Kepler said one grim day, "with the thought that I serve not the emperor, but the whole human race."

And I suspect there is some such fine wholeness in whatever we do in this spirit, right down to sweeping a room or the streets. Wholeness and oneness, each and all, the red-cloaked clown and the emperor; Beethoven, in the little church at Godesberg, touching the new organ to such a holy (whole) purpose of a week-day morning that the peasant women could not scrub the floor for delight and wonder, and then the better scrubbing from the line where they paused to listen to the matchless music.

If this man, then, had caught out of the joy of his youth and his unworn powers some one thing to do, and had drawn on his whole manhood for the power to do it well, to put heart and life into it without stint or stay, then heart and life would have come out of it, and the thing would have grown sacred, so that he could have afforded to look at it from the uttermost verge of life with joy. He could have felt about it as Wordsworth felt about some of his poems when Southey said, "If you will alter them in such and such a way, you will win both fame and fortune." He had neither then; but he said, "That is the true way, and I will die unheard rather than alter a word for such a reason." Such work, I say, always touches the deep, pure springs, whereof, if a man drink, he shall thirst no more,— except to drink at them again.

Such labor is always prayer, and the prayer which does not lead us toward such labor fails at last to rise above the roof-tree; and, failing here, we enter on the course which leads from joy to the judgment.

Because it is clear enough at last where the rock lay on which this noble and beautiful promise of a young man's life was wrecked. It lay in doing everything for enjoyment and nothing for joy,— that curse and bane and plague spot of a young man's life to-day.

This was what led a king among men from worship to idolatry, from reverence to superstition, and from a clean home, in which he lived with one woman, his own true wife, to a harem; from love to lust, from power to palsy, and from the first heaven to the last hell. For joy is of the Spartan stock,— nay, let me rather say of the grandest Christian. There is iron in the blood which pulses through the heart of joy. It is the sentinel's keeping guard in bitter weather and in a great and holy quarrel. It is Andrew Marvel's eating mutton hash and defying the king to buy him up for any dirty purpose. It is Wesley's sleeping on bare boards, and thanking God he had one whole side to sleep on. It is Luther's turning wood for bread, and overturning kingdoms for righteousness. It is theirs who search for the truth with the whole heart, and then hide it in noble endeavors. It is in the souls of merchants and clerks and artisans and "datal men," who will not shirk or fawn or lie, and will insist on honest dealings in what they do. It was not this man's way. It is not the way, I fear, in our time, of a great many who would like to pass for Solomons; but its lines run even with the way to the eternal life. Joy lies in chastity and purity, and charity touched with a tender concern for those we do not like, and in doing for duty what can never be pleasant, but must be done. It is in denying myself when myself would deny my manhood, and in bearing my cross, though I have no hope of a crown.

But that a joy like this can rise and ripen in our age, out of the joy of youth, without faith in God, in the world we live in, and the folk we live with, in the worth of our work, and in prayer for help from on high, my own many years of life deny, no matter whether I sit with this sad old king or say with holy Paul, "I have kept the faith." How large I should make the interpretation of these things I have no time to tell you. But, as I have seen a spring which had cut its way through the very granite, and then poured on to all high uses, gathering and giving as it made its way to the

river and the sea; and then another spring that only made a marsh about its margin, in which things would rot, but never ripen,—so I can see how men true to this truth I have tried to tell and working in this faith carve out a grand, sweet manhood which makes us all their debtors, or, failing in this, spread themselves out in dead levels of nothing in particular except procuring the means of enjoyment which rot the very fibre of their manhood as the years pass on, and open the way to a dreary old age and the cry, "A man hath no pre-eminence over a beast, for all is vanity." And so

"This young man is enough for me: brave, chaste,
Faithful to duty, by no vice debased;
Lord of himself, yet serving every one;
Fair, with frank eyes and jocund as the sun,
Smiling from sweet, glad lips all amply graced
With natural persuasion; pure from waist
To feet, and shoulder, that no man doth shun,—
Nor woman, neither,—his compulsive charm.
These great, good gifts he ne'er hath used for harm.
From his strong limbs, true heart, fine-fibred brain,
Sweetness flows into life like pure, fresh air
From mountains blown over a bed of pain:
I seek naught human loftier, naught more rare."

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Light on a Hidden Way

BY

Rev. ROBERT COLLYER

GEO. H. ELLIS
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1899

Entered at the Post-office, Boston, Mass., as second-class mail matter

PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

Dr. Savage expects to resume his series on "Immortality" next Sunday.

LIGHT ON A HIDDEN WAY.

"Why is light given to a man whose way is hid?"— JOB iii. 23.

"THE book of Job," says Thomas Carlyle, "is one of the grandest things ever written with a pen; our first statement, in books, of the problem of the destiny of man, and the way God takes with him on this earth; grand in its simplicity and epic melody, sublime in its sorrow and reconciliation; a choral melody, old as the heart of man, soft as the summer midnight, wonderful as the world with its seas and stars; and there is no other thing in the Bible, or out of it, of equal literary merit." It is not possible now to tell whether the book is a real history or a sort of Oriental drama. The question is one that will always keep the critics hard at work, so long as there are rational, and what ought in all fairness to be called not rational, schools in theology. My own idea is that the rude outline of the story was floating about the desert, as the story of Lear or Macbeth floated about in later times among our own forefelders, and that, like those great dramas, it was taken into the heart of some man now forgotten, and came out again endowed with this wondrous quality of inspiration and life, that will bear it onward through all time. But, whatever the truth may be in this direction, this is clear,— that, when Job put the question I have taken for a text, he was as far down in the world as a man can be who is not abased by sin. He had been the richest man in the country-side, honored by all who knew him for his wisdom, his goodness, or his money. He was now so poor that, he says, men derided him whose fathers he would not have set with the dogs of his flock. He had been a sound, healthy man, full

of human impulses and activities; had been sight to the blind, feet to the lame, a father to the poor, and a defender of the oppressed. He was now a diseased and broken man, sitting on the ashes of a ruined home; his fires all gone out; his household gods all shattered; his children all dead; and his wife, the mother of his ten children, lost to the mighty love which will take ever so delicate but true-hearted woman at such a time, and make her a tower of strength to the man. His wife — who should have stood, as the angels stand, at once by his side and above him — turned on him in his uttermost sorrow, and said, "Curse God, and die."

Two things, in this sad time, seem to have smitten Job with most unconquerable pain. First, he could not make his condition chord with his conviction of what ought to have happened. He had been trained to believe in the axiom we put in our Sunday-schools, that to be good is to be happy. Now he had been good, and yet here he was as miserable as it was possible for a man to be. And the worst of all was he could not deaden down to the level of his misery. The light given him on the divine justice would not let him rest. His subtle spirit — piercing, restless, dissatisfied — tried him every moment. Questions like these came up in his mind: "Why have I lost my money? I made it honestly, and made good use of it. Why is my home ruined? I never brought upon it one shadow of disgrace. Why am I bereaved of my children, and worse than bereaved of my wife? If this is the result of goodness, where is cause and effect? What is there to hold on by, if all this misery and mildew can come of upright, downright truth and purity?" Questions like these forced themselves upon him, and would not be silenced. If this spirit that troubled him could have whispered: "Now, Job, what is the use of your whining? You know that you have got just what you deserve; that you are a poor old pewter Pecksniff, with not one grain of real silver about you. Your whole life has been a sham. You have said in your heart,—

'No graven images may be worshipped,
Save in the currency;
Thou shalt not kill, but need not strive
Officiously to keep alive;
Thou shalt not covet, but tradition
Approves all forms of competition.'"

If the spirit could have spoken so to the man, he must have been dumb under a sense of the justice of his punishment; but there was no such sense for him. His entire life had been a good life, and the very light on his life in the past made his present way only all the darker.

Then the second element in Job's misery seems to lie in the fact that there appeared to be light everywhere except on his own life. If life would only strike a fair average; if other good men had suffered, too, or even bad men,— then he could bear it better. But the world went on just the same. The sun shone with as much splendor as on his wedding-day. The moon poured out her tides of molten gold, night fretted the blue vault with fires, trees blossomed, birds sang, and young men and maidens danced under the palms. Other homes were full of gladness. This man had sold his clip for a great price: the lightning had slain Job's sheep. That man had done well in dates. The tornado had twisted Job's trees down. Nay, worst of all, here were wicked men mighty in wealth; their houses in peace without fear, their children established in their sight, sending forth little ones like a flock, spending their days in prosperity, and yet saying, "Who is the Almighty that we should fear him?" while here he was a poor wreck, stranded on a desolate shore, a broken man, crying: "Oh that it were with me as in days gone by, when the candle of the Lord shone round about me; when I took my seat in the market-place, and justice was my robe and diadem! When I think of it, I am confounded. One dieth in the fulness of his prosperity, wholly at ease and quiet: another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, not having tasted pleasure. How is it? What does

it mean? Why is light given to a man whose way is hid?"

Now I suppose that not many men ever fall into such supreme desolation as this that is made to centre in the life of this most sorrowful man. "It is the possible of that which in itself is only positive." But, then, it is true that we may reach out in all directions and find men and women who are conscious of the light shining, but who cannot find the way, whose condition will not chord with their conception of life, and who, in a certain sense, would be better if they were not so good. The very perfection of their nature is the way by which they are most easily bruised. Keen, earnest, onward, not satisfied to be below their own ideal, they are yet turned so wofully this way and that by adverse circumstances that, at the last, they either come to accept their life as a doom, and bear it in grim silence, or they cut the masts when the storm comes, and drift, a helpless hull broadside to the breakers, to go down finally like a stone.

Here is a young man newly come to our city, fresh from his good country home. He is resolved to make a mark,— to be the best sort of a man. He is full of budding energies and capabilities. Let him once get hold fairly, and he is sure to succeed. But he finds it difficult to start: places are not plenty. It is very hard, uphill work: he strives, and stays poor. He does not find the way. At last he is hungry and faint in the wilderness, alone; and the devil comes tempting him. He is a very nice person. Probably this particular devil wears a good coat, lives in good style, it may be he has a pew in a church. He says: "Here is something I want done. If you will do it, you will get what *you* want,— the kingdom of the world. It is not what Puritanic people call right, to be sure; but there is no harm in it. Everybody does it; and, if you do it, you are sure to succeed." That young man is in danger, just as his life rises in strong, fierce jets, and is full of latent power. If he takes counsel of his impatience, he will kneel down there

and then, and do as he is bid. And it is possible that he will get what he bargained for, but with this difference,— that, while he stands fast in his integrity, though there is no way, the light shines, but, when he has once gone down, the way may be open, while the light is gone. Or he succeeds in all manly integrity, makes his fortune, and then gradually slides into a belief in a Providence like that Job believed in before his trouble came,— a Providence that will keep him prosperous, because he is a good man: a great crash comes, and he loses all, including his belief in God. Or he makes a fortune, and holds it, but then forgets that money to a man is like water to a plant,— only useful so long as it promotes growth. Like water in the fountain or water in the tank, keep it flowing, and it blesses; keep it stagnant, and it kills.

The maiden comes out of her home with the bloom of youth on her soul,— a wonder of love and trust. She walks wistfully down the world; and, gradually, she is aware that she will never meet the man she can wed. Yet her heart is full of love, and there are moments when she feels very, very sad, trying to reconcile her nature to her condition; and she cries, "Why is light given, when the way is hid?" Or she weds, believing that she has found a man sent from God for her, to find afterward, perhaps, that she is mistaken by half a diameter. Yet she will strive hard and long to see in him the man God has put into her heart, but will give it up at the last, and say, "Why is light given, when the way is hid?"

Or the man and woman are set each to each, like perfect music unto noble words; but one is taken, and the other left. John Wilson, walking down the world with such a wife by his side, said, "I shall die in my nest, I shall see no sorrow." But one morning he stood before his class, and said: "Gentlemen, I have not examined your essays. I could not see to read them in the valley of the shadow of death where I have been." And then the strong man bowed himself, and wept, and went to his darkened home.

Or the man and woman live in sweet accord; but their

home is too quiet, or it ripples over with sweet laughter, and then passes again into silence.

Or here in the larger life is a prince and leader of men. The roots of his power begin to ramify through all the land. He seems to be the one indispensable man of the time. In the sorest need of all, he is smitten down and dies.

Or here is a great cause, reaching back into a great principle. The light of the divine justice shines on the principle, and so wins men to it that they cannot rest. Year after year, they will stand suffering, toiling, dying, for their cause; but the way does not open. Yet they cannot choose but follow the light. If the light had not shone so in our own land, we might have ground along in some sort of affinity to slavery. It was light poured on the conscience of the nation that brought on the war: it was light shining through the darkness that kept the nation steady. Had no such light shone, we should have constructed a new Union, with the shackle of the slave for a wedding-ring. But the light stood like a wall of fire; yet how long it was only a light shining on a hidden way! — our homes black with desolation; fathers, mothers, wives, only putting on a cheerful look because they would not by their sadness dishearten the great heart of the nation.

And so, I say, in men and nations you will find everywhere this discord between the longing that is in the soul and what the man can do. Our life, as some one said of the cathedral of Cologne, seems to be a broken promise made to God; and —

> "How blest we should be,
> We have always believed,
> Had we really achieved
> What we nearly achieved!
> The thought that most thrilled
> Our existence is one
> That before we could frame it
> In language is gone.
> The more we gaze up into heaven,

The more do we feel our gaze fail.
All attempts to explore,
With earth's finite insight,
Heaven's infinite gladness,
Is baffled by something
Like infinite sadness."

Now, in trying to find some solution of this question, I want to say frankly that I cannot pretend to make the mystery all clear, so that it will give you no more trouble, because I cannot put a girdle round the world in forty minutes, and also because a full solution must depend greatly on our own *dis*solution. "Let the light enter," said the great German, and then — died. I believe, also, that the man who thinks he has left nothing unexplained, in the mystery of Providence and life, has, rather, explained nothing. I listen to him, if I am in trouble, and then go home and break my heart all the same, because I see that he has not only not cleared up the mystery, but that he does not know enough about it to trouble him. The "Principia" and the Single Rule of Three are alike simple and easy to him, because he does not know the Rule of Three. And so I cannot be satisfied with the last words which some later hand has added to the book that holds this sad history. They tell us how Job has all his property doubled, to the last ass and camel; has seven sons, again, and three daughters; has entire satisfaction of all his accusers; lives a hundred and forty years, sees four generations of his line; and then dies — satisfied. Need I say that this solution will not stand the test of life, and that if life, on the average, came out so from its most trying ordeal there would be little need for our sermons? For, then, every life would be an open, self-contained providence, and the last page in time would vindicate the first. Men do not so live and die, and such cannot have been the primitive conclusion of the history. It has deeper meaning and a sublimer justification, or it had never been inspired by the Holy Ghost.

And this is sure to suggest itself to you, as you read the story, that Job in his trouble would have lost nothing, and gained very much, if he had not been so impatient in coming to the conclusion that God had left him, that life was a mere apple of Sodom, that he had backed up to great walls of fate, and he had not a friend left on the earth. His soul, looking through her darkened windows, concluded the heavens were dark. The nerve, quivering at the gentlest touch, mistook the ministration of mercy for a blow. He might have found some cool shelter for his agony: he preferred to sit on the ashes in the burning sun. He knew not where the next robe was to come from: this did not deter him from tearing to shreds the robe that was to shelter him from the keen winds. It was a dreadful trial at the best: it was worse for his way of meeting it; and, when he was at once in the worst health and temper possible, he said, "Why is light given to a man whose way is hid?" Is not this now, as it was then, one of the most serious mistakes that can be made? I try to solve great problems of providence, perhaps, when I am so unstrung as to be entirely unfitted to touch their more subtle, delicate, and far-reaching harmonies. As well might you decide on some exquisite anthem when your organ is broken, and conclude there is no music in it because you can make no music of it, as, in such a condition of the life and such a temper of the spirit, try to find these great harmonies of God. When I am in trouble, then, and darkness comes down on me like a pall, the first question ought to be: "How much of this unbelief about providence and life, like Cowper's sense of the unpardonable sin, comes from the most material disorganization? Is the darkness I feel in the soul, or is it on the windows through which the soul must see?" Then, clear on this matter, the man tried so will endeavor to stand at the first where this sad-hearted man stood at the last, in the shadow of the Almighty, if he must stand in a shadow, and hold on to the confidence that somewhere within all this

trial is the eternal, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

It is a wonderful story. Job and his friends speculate all about the mystery, and their conclusions from their premises are entirely correct; but they have forgotten to take in the separate sovereign will of God, as working out a great purpose in the man's life, by which he is to be lifted into a grander reach of insight and experience than ever he had before. Job said, "I suffer: I am in darkness and disappointment and pain, because it is fate." Job's friends said: "No: you suffer because you have sinned. Rushes never grow without mire." They were both wrong, and all wrong. He suffered because that was the divine way of bringing him out of his sleek, well-satisfied content; and when, through suffering, this was done, he said, "I have heard of thee with mine ears, but now mine eye seeth thee." There is a bird, it is said, that will never learn the song his master will have him sing, while his cage is full of light. He listens, and learns a snatch of this and a thrill of that,—a polyglot of all the songs in the grove, but never a separate and entire melody of his own. But the master covers his cage,—makes the way all dark about him. Then he will listen and listen to the one song he has to sing, and try and try, and try again, until at the last his heart is full of it; and then, when he has caught the melody, the cage is uncovered. When there is light on the song, there is no need for darkness on the way. And so, if I had never gone into darkened rooms, where the soul stands at the parting of the worlds; or sat down beside widows and little children, when the desire of their eyes was taken away with a stroke; or grasped the hands of strong men, when all they had toiled for was gone,— nothing left but honor; or ministered to men mangled on the battlefields beyond all telling; and heard in all these places where darkness was on the way melodies,—*melodies* that I never heard among the commonplaces of prosperity,— I could not be so sure as I am that God often

darkens the way so that the melody may grow clear and entire in the soul.

Then, if this man could have known — as he sat there in the ashes, bruising his heart on this problem of providence — that, in the trouble which had come upon him, he was doing what one man may do to work out the problem for the world, he might again have taken courage. No man lives to himself. Job's life is but your life and mine, written in larger text. What we are all doing, as we stand in our lot, steady to our manliness or our womanliness in our black days, is to tell, in its measure, on the life and faith of every good man and woman coming after us, though our name may be forgotten. There is a story in the annals of science touching this principle,— that we cannot struggle faithfully with these things, and leave them as we found them. Plato, piercing here and there with his wonderful Greek eyes,—

> "Searching, through all he felt and saw,
> The springs of life, the depths of awe,
> To reach the law within the law,"—

was impressed by the suggestive beauty of the elliptic figure. He tried to search out its full meaning, but died without the sight. A century and a half after Plato, Apollonius came, was arrested in the same way, took up the question where Plato left it, tried to find out its full meanings, and died without the sight. "And so," says a fine writer, "for eighteen centuries some of the best minds were fascinated by this problem,— drew from it strength and discipline; and yet in all this time the problem was an abstract form, a beautiful or painful speculation. It did not open out into any harmonious principle. There was light on the thing, but no light on the way. In the full time Kepler came, sat down to the study, and by what we call the suggestion of genius, but ought to call the inspiration of the Almighty, found that the orbits of the planets were elliptical; and he died. Then Newton was born, took up the problem where

Kepler had laid it down, made all the established facts the base of his mightier labors; and, when he had done, he had shown that this figure, this problem, which had held men spell-bound through the ages, is a prime element in the law of universal gravitation,— at once the most beautiful theory and the most absolute conclusion of science. Then men could see how it was, because God had made the light shine on the thing, that the way was found. From Newton back to Plato, in true apostolic order, every man, bending over this mystery of a light where there was no way, and wrestling faithfully with it, had not only grown more noble in his own soul in the struggle, but had done his share toward the solution found by this greatest and last, who was also "born under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons."

So, I tell you, is this restless search for a condition that shall answer to our conception; this fascination which compels us to search out the elliptic of Providence, the geometric certainty underlying the apparent eccentricity. And every struggle to find this certainty, every endeavor to plumb the deepest causes of the discord between what the nature bears and what the soul believes, every striving to find the God of our loftiest faith in our darkest day, will in some way aid the demonstration, until in the full time some Newton of the soul will come, and, gathering the result of all these struggles between our conception of life and our condition in life, will make it the base of some vast generalization that will bring the ripest conclusions of the science of Providence into perfect accord with the grand apostolic revelation,—"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." We wrong the deepest revelations of life when we are not content to let this one little segment in the arc of our existence stand in its own simple, separate intention, whether it be gladness or gloom, and trust surely, if we are faithful, the full and perfect intention must come out in the full range of our being.

God seldom, perhaps never, works out his visible purpose in one life: how, then, shall he in one life work out his perfect will? The dumb poetry in William Burns, the father, had to wait for Robert Burns, the son; Bernardo waited to be perfected in his son, Torquato Tasso; William Herschel left many a problem in the heavens for John Herschel to make clear; Leopold Mozart wrestled with melodies that Chrysostom Mozart found afterward singing of themselves in every chamber of his brain; and Raymond Bonheur needed his daughter Rosa to come and paint out his pictures for him.

Dr. Reid has said that, when the bee makes its cell so geometrically, the geometry is not in the bee, but in the geometrician that made the bee. Alas, if in the Maker there is no such order for us as there is for the bee! If God so instruct the bee; if God so feed the bird; if even the lions, roaring after their prey, seek their meat from God; if he not only holds the linnet on the spray, but the lion on the spring,— how shall we dare lose heart and hope?

So, then, while we may not know what trials wait on any of us, we can believe that, as the days in which this man wrestled with his dark maladies are the only days that make him worth remembrance, and but for which his name had never been written in the book of life, so the days through which we struggle, finding no way, but never losing the light, will be the most significant we are called to live. Indeed, men in all ages have wrestled with this problem of the difference between the conception and the condition.

Life is full of these appeals, from the doom that is on us to the love that is over us,— from the God we fear to the God we worship. The very Christ cries once, "My God! why hast thou forsaken me?" Yet never did our noblest and best, our apostles, martyrs, and confessors, flinch finally from their trust that God is light, that life is divine, that there is a way, though we may not see it; and have gone singing of their deep confidence, by fire and cross, into the shadow of

death. It is true — nay, it is truest of all — that "men who suffered countless ills, in battles for the true and just," have had the strongest conviction, like old Latimer, that a way would open in those moments when it seemed most impossible. Their light on the thing brought a commanding assurance that there must some where, some time, be light on the way.

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SERIES ON

BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

XII. The Society for Psychical Research and the Immortal Life

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THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND THE IMMORTAL LIFE.

THE writer of the First Epistle to the churches of Thessalonica, in the fifth chapter and twenty-first verse, has used words which might well be the motto of this society. They are words which are a justification for all scientific inquiry. They are words which are a condemnation of any blind faith or the acceptance of positions for which there is no evidence. These words are, "Prove all things." Prove all things: test all things, try all things, criticise all things, investigate all things. "Hold fast that which"— bears the test —"is good": throw the rest away.

This has been the motto of science, of course, in all ages; but even to-day, so far from its being the motto of most religious thinkers, writers, speakers, it is the precise opposite. During the last week, for example,— and I may be pardoned for referring to this by way of illustration,— in one of the leading papers of the city there was a discussion concerning the case of Dr. Briggs, which took this ground: that a belief in immortality, the Bible as an inspired book, religious truth of any kind, simply could not be proved in accordance with the scientific method, or received on the basis of reason. And this was a writer speaking in defence of the Church and of religion, who said the Church, religion, Bible, immortality, — all these things,— if received at all, must be received simply by faith,— they cannot bear the test of reason. He would have gone on to say that they are above and beyond reason. If I had been in my usual condition, I should have publicly asked this writer a question. After you have put reason out of court, what reason is there for believing any-

thing, or believing one thing more than another? There is literally *no reason left*, after you have put it away. Therefore, literally, there is no reason why a man who takes this position should not accept Buddhism or Mohammedanism as well as Christianity. There is no reason left why he should believe anything,— no reason left why he should believe one thing more than any other.

Therefore, the man who takes this position, it seems to me, goes a little too far for the defence of his own proposition. But this is the attitude that has been taken, not only towards most of the great religious problems of the world, by the Churches of the past and the great Churches of the present: it is the position that has been taken in regard to this very matter which we are to discuss this morning.

I received a private letter recently, from which I am not at liberty to quote, and the names referred to in it of course I am not at liberty to mention; but the writer said he had been corresponding with two of the great theologians of the country, one a Congregationalist, the other a Methodist, the Methodist being a bishop, and that both of them had said they never expected to find anything like absolute proof of a future life,— they took it on faith, and did not believe that proof was possible.

So you see this same position of surrendering the possibility of proof extends, not only to most of the great church dogmas, but to this question that agitates the hearts that have ever loved or ever lost, as to whether death is the end of all.

We have traced briefly, as it has been necessary, in broad outline but with sufficient clearness, the beliefs of man from the beginning as to the life beyond death; and we have come to this point, which is a most significant one. As I have already said, men have held all sorts of strange attitudes towards this profoundest of all questions. They have believed on what they called faith; that is, the authority of somebody whose statements they have taken on trust. They

have reverenced some of these claims as a part of their religion. They have sneered at some as ghost stories in the daylight and in companionship with their friends: they have cringed and cowered with fear lest such things as ghosts might not be real, when they were alone and in the dark. They have taken almost every conceivable kind of attitude towards these questions except one of rational inquiry.

It seems to me, indeed, most striking that from the beginning of the world until during the last decade or two there has never been on the part of humanity anything like a serious investigation of a series of claimed facts, which, if true, or only partly true, are the most important facts in all the world. Think of it! Until the year 1882, to be specific, whatever particular individuals may have done, humanity had never made a combined, serious, scientific attempt to find the truth in this great matter!

Some people have said that, if God had intended us to know, he would have told us about it in the first place. Why not apply that to every problem? God told primitive man very little. He did not even tell him what was good to eat and what was poison: he had to find it out by experience. He has absolutely, in this sense, told us nothing. He has revealed himself in the facts, the wonders, the glorious ongoing life of the universe, but has left us to read these hieroglyphics, and find out their meaning for ourselves. He has done this in every department of thought and life. Why not here?

Then there are a great many persons who bravely tell you, however interesting it is, there is no use in trying to find out the truth in any scientific way, because it is impossible of discovery. How do they happen to know it is impossible? Great men in the past have told us that ever so many things were impossible which are every-day occurrences now. So we will not be quite content to take it on the dictum of anybody that it is impossible to discover another life.

If that other life be,— if it is not merely a fancy or a

dream,— why should we assume that it is undiscoverable? I know no reason; and I believe that the human race will keep on in its attempts, knocking at the door until it opens, if any door there be. Humanity has been advised ever since I can remember, and I presume for a good many centuries before that, to give up trying to find the North Pole; and it has been said over and over again that it would do no good to find it, anyway, and that it was impossible to find it, even if it would. But humanity has never given it up; and it will not until it gets there. So you may advise humanity as much as you please to give up seeking for an answer to this problem, If a man die, shall he live again? I do not believe it ever will be given up until the answer is found.

It is a little curious that so many men, religious men, should tell us that it is impossible — that they should believe a line in Shakspere rather than their own Bibles. I have heard it quoted over and over again, as though it were the summing up and the quintessence of all wisdom, that it is "a country from whose bourne no traveller returns." This is from Shakspere. Yet it flatly contradicts their Bibles and every religion on the face of the earth; for every one of them assumes and teaches as facts that somebody at some time has come from beyond that bourne with a message to us here. And that is the reason, deep down in their hearts,— literally, the remnant of a tradition of that sort,— that they believe. The only point is that they assume what God has done or what the people have done over and over again cannot be done now and is never going to be done again.

With so much of preliminary, let me come to indicate to you in outline, but with perhaps sufficient clearness and force, so that you shall see what it is about, the work of the Society for Psychical Research.

It was organized in England in the year 1882. It was organized in this country — and I was one of its corporate members, having studied facts that it proposed to investigate for years before it was organized — in the year 1885.

The first president of the society in England was Professor Henry Sidgwick, of Cambridge University, and one of the greatest ethical writers of this century. Of the original vice-presidents, five have died. Among these was Professor Balfour Stewart, one of the best scientific men of his age; another, Richard H. Hutton, for many years editor of the London *Spectator*, one of the great papers of England. Two other original vice-presidents still occupy their position,— the right Hon. Arthur J. Balfour, one of the famous names in modern England, member of Parliament, a fellow of the Royal Society; and Professor W. F. Barrett, of Dublin University. Mr. Edmund Gurney, who died in the midst of his work, and Mr. F. W. H. Myers are two other names famous all round the world. Mr. Myers I shall probably refer to again,— one of the great essayists and a well-known writer of the present time.

In this country we have not had so many great names; but we have accomplished some of the most important work right here among ourselves. I will name a few: Professor S. P. Langley, of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington; Professors Bowditch, Pickering, and Royce, connected with Harvard College; and one of the keenest and most interested workers of all, perhaps the greatest psychologist living, the man who is recognized throughout Europe as well as America as a leader in that direction, and whose leadership is being recognized by the fact that he is to go to Oxford for the next two years and lecture there on his special theme,— Professor William James, a brother of the famous novelist, Henry James. Professor James H. Hyslop, of Columbia College, is another man engaged in this work.

Lord Rayleigh, Professor Ramsey, F.R.S., and Professor Lodge. One of the greatest mathematicians and physicists living in England at the present time, and who has played an important part in the recent work of the society in England, is Professor Lodge. Professor W. F. Barrett, of Dublin, was active in starting the work both in England and

here. One more I must speak of, because he is at present the president of the society in England. This is Sir William Crookes, F.R.S., the inventor of the Crookes tube that has played so large a part in connection with the X-rays during the last two or three years, and who has occupied one of the foremost positions in the scientific life and work of England during the last twenty-five years.

In this country Bishop Brooks, Rev. R. Heber Newton, and others have been intensely interested in the work, and have added to it as much as they were able. And, while there are a great many people who for one reason or another think that this matter is hardly worth their time and attention, let me give you the word of a man like Gladstone, — Gladstone, the foremost statesman of his age; Gladstone, who held in his hand problems of the war and peace, not only of Europe, but of the world; Gladstone, the Churchman from head to foot, the orthodox believer in the Trinity, the Bible, Biblical and ecclesiastical tradition; Gladstone, one of the greatest brains, one of the purest hearts, one of the keenest controversialists of his time. He accepted an honorary membership in this society,— honorary, because he was too busy to do work connected with it, but was glad to have his name associated with it. And, in accepting it, he writes, "It"— that is, the work of the Society for Psychical Research —"is the most important work which is being done in the world — by far the most important." He, the statesman, watching the changes, the institutions, the growth, the plots, the failures, the successes of nations; he, keenly interested in theological problems; he, looking at psychical research, and understanding all that science has accomplished, with all its adventures and discoveries,— he says that this one thing is the most important work that is being done in the world.

I have told you that; I have been saying it for years; but the opinion of a man like Gladstone carries weight with everybody who thinks. Gladstone does not say, I am a

Churchman, I have it in the Bible, I have it in ecclesiastical tradition, and that is enough: this work of yours done in attempting to prove it scientifically is the most important work in the world!

Now what is the attitude of these men? Professor Sidgwick in his inaugural address challenged the world, saying to men of science and men of thought everywhere: Here are certain strange alleged facts,—facts testified to since the beginning of the world, facts testified to in every nation to-day. Are they true? Are they false? He challenged the scientific world in England by the statement: It is a scandal to intelligent, thinking men and students that this problem should not be settled. It is a scandal that the world should not find out whether these things are true or not. And this is the spirit in which he undertook the investigation.

And remember that no member of this society commits himself to a belief in anything. He simply promises seriously and earnestly to investigate with the one purpose, if possible, of finding out what is true. That is all. That is the attitude which they took from the beginning, and no member of the society is committed to the belief of any other member. In other words, it occupies precisely the same position that any great scientific organization occupies anywhere,—its one aim is truth. It is possible, for example, that an astronomer may think he has made a discovery in the heavens, and he reports this to the society, but the other astronomers doubt it. They do not think he has brought adequate proof yet; and so they wait and study until the proof is overwhelming and all reasonable men are obliged to accept it, or until it is decided that it was a mistake in the first place, and that no sufficient evidence can be found. This is the attitude of this society, then. So that, if towards the end I shall tell you the opinions of certain members of this society, you will understand that they do not bind the opinions of anybody else at all, and that these

men expect the world to be convinced only when sufficient evidence has been brought to bear down all unbelief and all opposition.

Now what are the things these men are studying? You know that a few years ago there was a man in France, by the name of Mesmer, who discovered what he called "Mesmerism," or what came to be called Mesmerism, after his name. It was scoffed at by all wise people as nonsense. A scientific committee of investigation was appointed; and they looked the matter all through, as they supposed, and reported it all fraud and humbug. There is not an intelligent man on the face of the earth to-day, however, that does not know that it, and a good deal more, is true: only to-day it is called "hypnotism" instead of "Mesmerism," — that is all; and it is being used as a part of the medical armory, a storehouse of weapons against disease, by hundreds of the best physicians in France and Germany, in England and America.

Then there are a lot of other facts. There are questions of the "subliminal consciousness," as it is called. We know that the mind works when we are asleep, or when our ordinary consciousness is engaged in attending to something else. So that this subliminal consciousness of ours became a fact for investigation. Then there are clair-audience, clairvoyance. There is the visible movement of physical bodies without any visible reason for their moving; there is the playing of musical instruments by no visible fingers or hands; there are visions, there are voices, there are scenes and experiences of death-beds; there are what are called hauntings, wraiths, doubles, phantasms of the dead and of the living. There is no sort of question that there are phantasms of both the dead and the living; but no scientific man takes that as proving immortality. It simply raises a question as to what they are and what they mean. But that what we call ghosts exist, no unprejudiced student has the slightest doubt.

So there are all these various fields of research. There are the reports of houses that are haunted. There are trances, visions, voices, automatic writings, such as I alluded to a Sunday or two ago. These are claimed facts; and it is a little strange that they have been claimed from the beginning of human history, only they have never been seriously or scientifically investigated before. I confess to you that it would be a relief to me to find out that there was truth in them, if only for the sake of finding out that the human race has not been crazy for ages. If there is only a grain of truth, no matter how exaggerated the stories have been, it would run a luminant light of reason up along the path of the human race. Tacitus, the Roman historian, nobody doubts when he talks of other things; and he tells these stories. He was a little wild and credulous, as we say when this kind of stories is told. So we have been accustomed to throw them away instead of investigating and finding if there were not the shadow of some great truth in them.

Now this Society for Psychical Research, both in England and America, set itself seriously about investigating these matters, just as they would investigate a bone of an animal dug up from the earth or the remains of a leaf preserved in a rock, or some other equally important matter. And I submit to you whether this matter is not as important as bones or petrified leaves or the dredging of the bottom of the sea, or any other of the great — and I do not wish to belittle them — objects of scientific research? But, when I find a man who devotes his life to the study of petrified leaves or the bones of animals, or to something of this sort, and who scouts and sneers at these great questions, it seems to me that he is exalting that which is little and belittling that which is great. For, if the Society for Psychical Research does no more, it has already unspeakably enlarged the boundaries of human thought concerning man himself. Up to the present time there has been no dark continent or "Darkest Africa" on the face of the earth so dark as the

mind of man; and out of this mind of man have been coming reports and beliefs of ten thousand mysterious things, which have whispered and promised wonders beyond human imagination. Now, if we do nothing more than add new continents to our knowledge of human nature, it seems to me that is worth while. It seems to me that, only next to the question of immortal life, is the most important subject on the face of the earth.

Now I may mix in a little of my own personal observation as I go along, though I am not to enter into personal detail concerning my own investigations this morning. Here are these claimed facts,— strange, indeed, if they are true, and strange, yes, perhaps stranger, in view of the fact that the world has always been accepting them, if they be not true. Now how can we conceivably explain them? Take all these things that form the subject of the study of the Society for Psychical Research. How can these two facts be explained?

First, you can explain them, as thousands of people do, by saying that they are all fraud from the beginning.

In the next place, you can explain a great many of them as being illusion, misconception on the part of the sitter or of the psychic.

Then, in the third place, you can range them under the theory of telepathy.

When you have passed telepathy, if you go beyond it at all, you are over the border land in spite of yourself, and in the presence of invisible intelligences, all of whom always claim that they used to live here on this earth. Now I know perfectly well, and the Society for Psychical Research has discovered over and over again, that there is any quantity of fraud. There are a great many people in this world willing to get their living in what happens to be the easiest way, and as to whether it necessitates telling the truth or avoiding deception of other people does not seem to trouble their consciences much. So, if there is an oppor-

tunity to get an easy living by simulating or assuming these things, you may be sure it is not lost. You men who do business on Wall Street, know that there are a good many such people engaged in business. Then, naturally, there is a good deal of self-deception. Unless a person is experienced in the matter, when he goes and sits with a psychic, he is pretty sure to tell the psychic all that is necessary to know on the subject. He "gives himself away," as we say, by his tattle about himself.

Then there are a great many strange experiences which the psychic passes through for which he or she flies off to the land of spirits in search of an explanation, when an explanation could be found a good deal nearer home. And you know it is one of the cardinal principles of science to seek the nearest, the easiest, the most rational explanation.

But now we come to telepathy. I have known, intimately Dr. Richard Hodgson, who is at the head of the society in this country, and who is one of the most careful scientific, sceptical investigators that I have ever known; and he told me it was his avowed intention to explain every conceivable fact without having anything to do with spirits, if he possibly could. He was bound as a scientist to stretch every other theory until it broke before he would admit the possibility of our having to do with anybody who had passed beyond the border land of what we call Death. But the Society for Psychical Research has demonstrated over and over again that telepathy, at least, is true. I know it is true from my own experiences; though I have no time to stop and give you cases, because it would take all day if I should treat my subject in that way.

What does this mean? It means that minds separated as far as from London to India communicate with each other, without even wireless telegraphy to help them; that, in the case of sudden accident or death,—that is, when one soul cries out for its mate,—that mate hears and knows what is taking place. Now, if things like this happened only once

or twice or thrice, or ten or twenty times, perhaps you would say it was mere coincidence; but, when it happens a hundred or a thousand times, the coincidence theory grows more difficult than the other one.

And, in regard to the attempt of people generally to explain these super-normal facts, let me say that, after years of study, I have found a great many explanations harder to accept than the original facts. I have felt about it somewhat as the old lady did who borrowed a copy of the "Pilgrim's Progress" with Scott's notes, which were intended to be explanatory and helpful. She brought the book back, saying she understood it all except the notes. I have the same feeling sometimes in studying these matters,— that they are plain enough except the explanations; and they seem a good deal harder for me to accept than the natural, claimed fact.

I know a case of telepathy, I know it beyond question, between the Indian Ocean and this city of New York. We have not discovered the law yet. We have not brought it under control, any more than we have wireless telegraphy. I am not at all certain that we shall not by and by. Think what it means, you who are astonished at the telephone and telegraph and the thousand advances and discoveries of the world,— think what it means for two minds or two hearts or two souls to come into contact, when separated by the diameter of the globe. Is there any other wonder of the modern world to compare with it?

By way of suggestion as to a possible scientific explanation of it which may come by and by, let me say this. We know that two musical instruments placed a certain distance apart, and keyed so as precisely to correspond with each other, will sometimes respond when either is touched. It is possible that there may be such a thing as minds or brain molecules keyed to each other so that, when some great sorrow or anticipated evil or stress touches one of them, there is response in the other, no matter how great the distance that may separate them.

Telepathy, then, is established. Clairvoyance, clairaudience,— nobody who knows anything about them denies that they are true, whatever their explanation may be. There are people who see without eyes and hear without ears; that is, who see and hear apart from the ordinary use of the physical organs supposed to be necessary for the exercise of those functions. I could tell you wondrous stories, if I had time, which I know are true, about these. What does this mean? It just suggests, does it not, that, if the soul can begin right here to get along without the use of its ordinary senses, it may be possible for it to get along without them altogether. It suggests it, I say: it does not prove it. I think you must have heard the story of the Second Adventist who thought he would startle Emerson by telling him that the world was coming to an end in a week or two. "Well, suppose it is, my friend," was Emerson's reply. "I think I can get along without it."

So it is possible, if we can get along without the use of the ordinary senses to a certain degree, we might carry it farther, and that there is a way of living without these bodies that so frequently seem to be the whole of us.

But passing beyond telepathy, which the Society for Psychical Research has proved beyond question, there are all the other subjects for investigation,— hauntings, ghosts, every kind of vision and trance. If you will study, you will find that an attempt has been made to explain all these by telepathy. We have come now to face the fact, however, that there are a lot of important things which certain people in the society think cannot be explained by telepathy. For instance, Frederick W. H. Myers has published to all the world his belief that, as the result of his investigations as a member of the Society for Psychical Research, there is no such thing as death. He thinks it is scientifically demonstrated that those we call dead are alive, and that occasionally, beyond any question, they communicate with us. Professor Lodge, one of the leading physical scientists and

mathematicians of England, has come to the same conclusion. Dr. Hodgson, a graduate of Cambridge in England, who has travelled all over the world, one of the finest scientific investigators I have known, after fighting against this conviction for years, has at last published to the world that he is compelled by his facts to believe that those that we call dead are alive, is compelled to believe that we do get communications from them now and then. He feels perfectly sure he has had communication after communication with personal friends of his own, and that he has established beyond any scientific question the fact of personal identity.

Now let me indicate to you a moment the direction in which this study leads. I investigated this matter years before there was any Psychical Society. I did it because my parishioners were coming to me for help and sympathy; and I found I ought to have something better than prejudice to give them. I never tried to get into communication with a personal friend, as dearly as I would love to. I have never made that my object. I have simply studied it, to find if there is any truth here.

Now let me give you my word for one thing. I have had psychics tell me so many times things which I knew there was no earthly possibility of the psychics's having ever known anything about that it has become a commonplace to me: it does not astonish me any more than to talk through the telephone. It has happened hundreds of times, and I have pursued this question with the same rigid method that I would study a brick or a bone; for I do not want to be fooled or to be the means of fooling anybody else. So up to this time psychics have told me over and over and over again, and it has happened hundreds of times in the investigations of the society, things which the psychic did not know, could not have known; but I have always said, when it happened to me: That is not enough. I knew it. And, possibly, though I do not know how, my mind may in some strange, mystic way have been reflected in the mind of the psychic,—

it may have been a case of telepathy or mind-reading. So I must have something more.

At last that which I sought for came. I have been told things over and over, perfectly natural things, things that concerned me and what claimed to be the teller on the other side — I have had important things told me that by no possibility could the psychic — who was not a public professional psychic at all, but a personal friend — have known, and which I could not have known. I have had, for example, a thing like this told me,— how a person was and what a person was doing two hundred miles away at the time,— a message quicker than the telegraph could have brought, that which by no possibility could either of us have known. I have had internal mental experiences of sorrow and trouble brought to me that were buried in the heart of a friend, of which I had never dreamed, over and over again.

Whether you have investigated it or not, these things are facts; and, if they are true, they take us beyond mind-reading, they take us beyond telepathy. Think for a moment of the kind of explanations I have had people offer. They have said, in the face of certain facts I have given them, How do you know that your subliminal consciousness, that consciousness which is below what we ordinarily call consciousness, your sub-conscious self,— how do you know that that sub-conscious self does not tap Omniscience, and get at the facts of the universe? They seem to me infinitely more difficult explanations than the facts themselves,— more strange, more *outré*, harder to accept or believe.

So, friends, it has come to this: that, after years of investigation, a large number of the leading thinkers, students, authors, scientists, physical scientists, chemists, mathematicians,— great minds,— have come to believe that there is no possible way of explaining that which has been over and over again proved to be fact without supposing that they have been in communication with some invisible intelligence.

That at present is my own belief. I do not hold it dogmatically. If somebody can give me an explanation for my facts, I will take it. I want only the truth. But I hold this at present as what a scientist would call a "provisional hypothesis," as an adequate explanation for my facts until I can get a simpler and better one. That they are facts I know; and that these facts take us over the border and whisper in our ears the certainty of immortal life I believe. And I believe not on faith, not on the basis of tradition, not for anything the Bible says. Though in saying this I am not criticising or belittling the Bible. I believe because a fact has come to and been handled by myself,—a fact which I can explain no other way.

And if it be true, friends, as I have told you before, there are no other problems on the face of the earth that need trouble us. The moral problem as to whether God's government seems good and merciful or not is of no account in the face of the certainty of an immortal life and the chance of an immortal evolution; the question as to whether we are rich or poor is of no account; the question as to whether we are sick or well is of no account; the question of the loss of friends becomes diminished to a little temporary separation with the certainty of an everlasting union.

Believing this, death is wiped out; and an immortal career opens before us, leading to the highest heights that imagination can conceive, and suggesting that, when we have reached those, only something finer and better still remains.

Father, we believe that the mysteries of Thy universe are mysteries, not because Thou hast covered them with Thy hand on purpose, but only because we have not yet become wise enough to solve and understand them; and so, reverently, trustingly, lovingly, we go forward to find ever grander and grander truth, and to know Thee as the loving Father speaking to and guiding His children. Amen.

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BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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MESSIAH PULPIT

NEW YORK

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SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

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SERIES ON

BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

XIII. Possible Conditions of Another Life

GEO. H. ELLIS
272 CONGRESS STREET, BOSTON
104 E. 20TH STREET, NEW YORK
1899

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To the Readers of "Messiah Pulpit":—

In spite of many breaks, caused by prolonged illness, this sermon closes the series on Immortality, which, by agreement with my old friend and publisher, Mr. Ellis, will be published in book form in October by Messrs. G. P. Putnam's Sons, of New York.

I shall preach again this season — if my doctors will permit. But — and I hope my readers will be glad to know this — the best medical authority I can find in New York tells me that I shall be as well as ever again by next fall.

So, in good hope of a long continuance of pleasant relations with both my reading and my listening audiences, I am

Sincerely,

M. J. SAVAGE.

May 23, 1899.

POSSIBLE CONDITIONS OF ANOTHER LIFE.

As a text, I take from the Epistle to the Hebrews the twelfth chapter and first verse,— "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

You will understand, I trust, that I am not dogmatizing this morning, that I am not assuming to tell you only things which I claim to know. I speak with no authority. I give you only what seems to me to be rational thoughts and theories concerning another life, of the fact of which I feel perfectly sure.

When we come to the last moment of life, as we call it here, I believe that we shall find it not a horror, not a pain, but only a lovely sleep. Those who have the best right to an opinion on this subject will always tell you that in ten thousand cases there is rarely any consciousness of suffering in the fact of dying. Let us, then, put away from us that one fear. We may suffer a good deal during the rest of our lives. I do not believe we shall suffer in the process of passing from this world to the next.

Neither do I believe that there is going to be any marked or sudden change in us. Were I to die at this moment, I believe that, on my first coming to consciousness in the other life, I should be just my simple self. I see nothing whatever in the fact or process of dying that should make

any marked change in us, any more than, as I have said, our going to sleep last night and waking up this morning has made another kind of being of us.

I think we have distorted all our ideas of the other life by our theological speculations, and by supposing that death is a line the moment we have crossed which our destiny is fixed, and we are either devils or angels forever. I do not believe that we change. We carry with us our personal consciousness, our memory of what we have been, and who have been our friends, and those most closely associated with us. If I could be persuaded that I was to enter another life, and at the same time forget all about this one, and who I have been while here, I would not give much for its possession. It would mean absolutely nothing to me. I believe that I shall wake up from that sleep conscious of the past, conscious that I am I, and remembering and loving those that were dear to me here.

Neither do I believe, as some seem to, that the going out into that other world is into a strange and lonely country. When we came into this world, we were expected. Our coming was prepared for, and we were welcomed into arms of love and tenderest care. I do not believe that the next step ahead in the universe is into something poorer than the occasion of our coming here. So I believe that we shall find ourselves among friends, in a place that shall seem very much like home, with people who, as Mr. Collyer has somewhere and at some time said, are "just folks like the rest of us," so that there will be no lonely or sad waking up for us when we reach that other country.

Now I wish to mark very distinctly, here at the outset, one point that appears to me to be of great importance. We may be able, clearly, scientifically, beyond any question, to establish the fact of another life beyond this; and yet we may never be able to know very much about it in detail until we get there. I speak of this, and wish to speak of it with emphasis, because a thousand times the question is

asked me, if anybody has ever reported from the other side, why have they not told us all about it.

Will you note carefully with me one fact? All our knowledge here is limited of necessity by our past experience, the experience of the race. If I were to attempt to describe to you any new thing or any new place, I could do it only by comparing it with something with which you are already familiar; and, just in so far as it was unlike anything with which you were familiar, just in so far it would be simply impossible for me to describe it to you so that you could have any intelligible idea of it.

Suppose, for example, that I should come back from a journey in Central Africa; and should sit down with a friend, and say, I found some very strange and curious thing there; and he should say, Well, what shape was it? I would say: It was not the shape of anything you ever saw. It was a new shape. What color was it? It was a new color. What was it like? It was not like anything you ever saw. Do you not see that it would be absolutely impossible for me to explain it to him, though I might know about it and might be absolutely certain of the fact?

So, just in so far as this other life, which I believe is all around us, transcends the life with which we are familiar here, just in so far it is simply impossible for even an archangel to describe it to us, to give us an intelligible picture of it.

I sit down beside a Sioux Indian, and I talk to him about Herbert Spencer's philosophy. I may be familiar with it, but it is so beyond any experience or development of thought that he has had that it would be utterly impossible for us to understand each other. You sit down by a child of eight years, and let him ask you questions that imply twenty years of experience, and can you make yourself plain? You may know all about it. The child has had no experience in the light of which it could interpret the things that you would say. So it is nothing against the fact that some of us

believe that another world has been discovered, and that occasionally a message comes from thence, that this message is not able to answer all the questions which curiosity may suggest.

In the nature of things, as I have said, it is impossible for us to understand or comprehend or clearly picture to ourselves anything whatsoever that transcends human experience. So you need not doubt the fact itself because you do not happen to know all about it and can find nobody who can tell you.

Where is this other country? The ancient peoples, as we have seen, put it frequently below the surface of the earth or away in some far space of the heaven, thinking that the rainbow might be a bridge over the abyss that led to this far-off paradise. Others have located it in Isles of the Blessed toward the sunset. In all conceivable places has the imagination of man located the other life. Our astronomy, an astronomy learned and demonstrated since the principal theological creeds of the time were formulated, has compelled us to change our conception as to the definite location of any possible or conceivable spirit world. I am inclined to believe that it is very near us. It may fold this old earth of ours round, as does the atmosphere. Not that the inhabitants of it are compelled to remain always in contact with the earth. For I believe that death releases us from the prisoning of one planet and makes us citizens of the universe. But I believe that this spirit world is all about us. It may be true, as Milton speculated when he said,—

> "Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
> Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep."

Now take a word of the most authoritative scientist of the age as touching this matter. Professor Jevons is one of the greatest authorities of the world. In his famous book called "Principles of Science" he says, "We cannot deny

the strange suggestion of Young that there may be independent worlds, some possibly existing in different parts of space, but others perhaps pervading each other unseen and unknown in the same space."

Who is this Young that Jevons quotes? He is the man who controverted the theory of light which was held by Newton, and converted the world to his theory, which is the universally accepted one to-day. In other words, he is one of the great names in the science of the world; and he tells us that for anything our eyes and ears have to say to the contrary, we may be surrounded on every hand by other worlds, invisible, intangible to us. We are so apt,— we people who think we know it all,— to be the fools of our senses.

Do you know that I can see only after the ethereal vibrations reach a certain number in a second, and that the moment these vibrations pass beyond another certain number I cease to see? In other words, I can see a narrow space while these vibrations are kept within certain limits; while on either hand the universe stretches off into infinity, invisible to our present senses. So I can hear within certain limits of ethereal vibrations: up to a certain point I hear nothing. They do not produce on the drum of the ear the effect capable of being translated, in the mysterious fashion of which we know nothing, to the brain as sound. After a certain number of vibrations have been reached, all is again quiet to our senses. Huxley tells us that, if our ears were adapted to take in all the vibrations, the noises of the growing of flowers in the night would be as loud as a thunder-storm.

In other words,— and this is all I wish you to take from what I am saying,— there may be millions of spiritual creatures walking the earth, pervading the atmosphere all round us, real, thrilling and throbbing with life, a life more intense than anything we know anything about or can dream of, and our present senses take no cognizance of them whatsoever. Do not imagine, then, that a person or

thing can not exist because you cannot see it or hear it or feel it.

Do these people inhabiting the other world have bodies? I think so. I do not know what powers of imagination may be possessed by other people; but what some people talk about as "pure spirit" means simply pure nothing at all to me. Is there anything unscientific or unreasonable in talking about the inhabitants of this other world as embodied? Nothing whatever, to a man who really understands what he is talking about. Scientists are perfectly familiar with states of matter so ethereal that they are not cognizant to any of our senses. So real though invisible bodies may exist. Ninety-nine times in a hundred or nine hundred and ninety-nine times in a thousand, perhaps, they are humbug and fraud; but a "spirit" photograph is perfectly rational, and not in the slightest degree unscientific. I do not know that there ever was a fact of that sort; but it is perfectly possible,— so far as science has anything to say about it,— for the sensitive plate of a camera can see better than human eyes. You can photograph an invisible star. You can photograph the side of an old ship after it has been painted over and over until no human eye can detect the lettering underneath; and the photograph will show that which is covered by the coats of paint. A camera, then, may see better than we can.

Let me give you one instance in this direction as a suggestion. Alfred Russel Wallace is the most famous scientific man living on earth to-day. He made independently, and about the same time, the same discovery that Darwin made; and from the Isles of the Southern Sea he sent home to Darwin a paper to be read at the British Association, setting forth this discovery. And at the same time Darwin was writing his book, not thinking that any one else was thinking the same thoughts. So this man shares, and always will share, with Darwin the glory of discovering the central principle of evolution. He told me in conversation

some years ago that he had carried on this practice of attempting to get photographs in the other world, with a friend in a private house, month after month; and he said, "I got a perfectly recognizable photograph of my own mother, which was utterly unlike any picture taken of her during her life." If true, this could not have been a copy of anything in existence — except his mother. This is Wallace's testimony, which you may consider for what it is worth.

So it is perfectly possible, I believe, that the inhabitants of the other world are embodied in some ethereal way, which we, perhaps, cannot understand to-day, and that they thrill and throb with life, in comparison to which this life of ours may seem to them almost a sleep.

Now comes another question. I have been asked it, I do not know how many times,— thousands, I suppose. If our friends are about us and can see our suffering and struggle and temptation and disappointment and tears, how can it be any heaven to them? Before answering that question, as I intend to do, let me ask another. Which would you rather do, if you could have your choice when you leave this world,— go away somewhere so far off that you could not by any possibility know what was happening to your loved ones, or would you rather be near by, even though they were suffering and you shared a little their pain? I had rather be where I could know what was happening to my wife and children and friends, even if they were in trouble, than to be away off in some delectable spot in space, trying to forget about any loved ones here, in order that I might be happy. That would be no heaven to me.

But here is another answer which seems to me absolutely conclusive. A mother, as she sits in her home with her little child playing at her feet, sometimes has an experience like this. The child breaks her doll or plaything of some kind or another; and this is a heart-breaking sorrow to the little one. But it does not break the heart of the mother at

all. She picks the child up in her lap, clasps her to her heart, soothes and comforts her. She knows that it is but a passing sorrow, and is not going to cloud the child's life forever. So it seems to me that those who have found out to a certainty what the grand issue of life means cannot be ever troubled because we shed a few tears over a loss in Wall Street or because we have a pain which may last us for a week. They know what is before us, they know it is to be victory in time; and perhaps they know that these experiences of suffering that we are passing through are part of the training that is to make us capable of entering into the joy and felicity which they have found their own.

There is another question. People say to me time and time again,— and I am answering these as though I believed them, you see,— If the people in the other world, my friends in the other world, can communicate with anybody, why don't they come directly to me? Why must they go to a psychic, a stranger, somebody I know nothing about?

In the first place, I tell you frankly, I do not know anything about it. But I have a theory which seems to me a very reasonable one. Let me ask a counter-question. If electricity will run along a wire,— I am using the old theory that electricity is a fluid; but I do not know what it is and do not know anybody who does,— if electricity can convey a message from Chicago to New York over a wire, why cannot it convey it over a board fence? I do not know; and there is nobody in the world who does know. We simply know the fact; and, knowing that, we do not waste our time trying to operate over board fences. If we want a message from a friend in Chicago, we expect it to come over the wire.

Now why cannot my friend come directly to me? I do not know; but, supposing the fact, my theory of it is this. I believe that what we call psychic sensitiveness — that is, the ability to be impressed in a conscious way — might be

compared to musical sensitiveness. Almost all persons have a little sense of musical sounds; but there are very few who can master instruments or who can sing so that anybody wants to hear them,—very few, indeed. Well, now, will you go without music because you must go to the experts, the masters, the musical geniuses, to get it? Or will you sit at home, and say, I will not have any music until my next-door neighbor can furnish it or I can furnish it myself?

I do not know why we know only certain facts. I believe that this psychic sensitiveness is something that we all share within certain limits, but that there is only now and then a psychic genius, one so sensitive that he or she is usable, so to speak, in a practical way. That is my theory of it. I do not know why, but I do know the fact; and I have known people,—and let me point out the unreasonableness of it in a word, in passing,—I have known people who said, A friend of mine died ten years ago, and promised that, if it were possible, he would communicate with me, and let me know that he was really alive; and I have heard nothing from him. And I have said over and over again, Have you ever given him a chance? and, if you have not, what right have you to find fault that he has not reported? Perhaps it is your fault, and not your friend's.

There is another point here. I believe that these friends of ours are ministering spirits. Not that they stay always by our side,—you will see in a moment I believe very differently from that,—but many of them may be ministering spirits, watching around us, rendering us service of which we have little knowledge, which we cannot comprehend or explain to-day. They may interfere sometimes to render us a signal service. To illustrate what I mean, and to show what seems to me to be a more rational theory than that commonly held. Some people believe that there have been "providential" interferences in their lives,—certain things have happened which seemed inexplicable to them, at any rate; and they

wondered whether God had been caring for them in some special way. Now I cannot think of God as partial. I cannot think that he hears the prayer of one person, and turns a deaf ear to the heart-breaking cry of thousands. That does not seem to me worthy of our thought about God. And yet there do happen these strange coincidences. I have a friend,—and her name is so well known to you all that I am sure she would not mind my mentioning it,—Mrs. Mary A. Livermore, famous for her devoted services during the war, and one of the greatest woman speakers that the world has ever known. She told me of her life being saved during her travels in the West on a certain occasion by her hearing and instantly obeying a voice. She did not know where it came from; but she leaped, as the voice ordered her to, from one side of a car to the other, and instantly the side where she had been sitting was crushed in and utterly demolished. This she told me. I know she is not a liar. I cannot believe that this was the interference of God; but it may have been the interference of some friend in the invisible. And this may account for interferences happening at some times, and not at others.

Suppose I am on the street to-morrow, and an accident happens to me. A friend may be in the neighborhood, and see it and come to my rescue. But the friend may not be there. There may be no one cognizant of the fact, so no rescue may come to me. This seems to me a possible and very rational theory of accounting for what we call special providences or interferences on our behalf.

And there may be a grain of truth in the Catholic doctrine of the saints. If I cry for help in my need, and a friend knows that I cry, and recognizes that need, and can help me, and does help me, my prayer is answered; though it may not have been by the interference of God in the ordinary sense of that expresssion. So, possibly, these heart-cries of ours, that go up into what to us is the silence, may reach the ears and touch the hearts of the friends who are not so far

away as we ordinarily imagine; and out of that unseen there may frequently come to us help and comfort and strength.

These are possible things. I have not said one single word so far that any science or scientific man on the face of the earth has any right to contradict. He may tell me, and tell me truly, that I have said a good many things I cannot demonstrate; and I grant it. But he cannot demonstrate that they are not true. He cannot prove the negative; and he cannot prove that they are unreasonable. They are perfectly within the possibilities of the universe as we know it scientifically.

Now let us raise the question as to what it means to go over and live in that other life. Most of us, I suppose, have given up all fear of the old orthodox place of fire and torment; but we carry in ourselves heavens and hells, and, though we may put out the fires of the infernal regions, we do not thus put out the fires in our own bosoms which we ourselves have kindled. So, if we wish happiness in that other life, we must cultivate that in us which is spiritual and which is good. It is sometimes said that any quantity of the life we lead here will be of no use to us over yonder. It has been said, concerning certain men, "They made themselves wonderful scholars in certain directions; but they died young, and now what is the use of it all?" Just as though that experience was thrown away. I do not believe it is thrown away at all. A man may cultivate himself in following a certain pursuit. If he cultivates himself nobly and rightly, that general development of power may be just as valuable to him in some other pursuit or some other condition of life as it is here. So that all the intelligence that we have wrought out, all the development of self-control, of character, of nobility, of love, of goodness,— these things are imperishable, and are, perhaps, those which Jesus had in mind when he advised us to lay up treasures in heaven, and not on the earth,— to lay up the treasures that are invisible in the place that is at present invisible, and

where we may take them up and find them of value on our arrival.

In that famous thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, Paul says, "If we have knowledge, it shall pass away." He is discussing things that pass away and those that remain. He is true. He is right in certain directions. I may develop all kinds of knowledge in this life, and in the other land I may find myself in circumstances where that knowledge is of no value at all; but the cultivation that I have gone through in acquiring that knowledge may be of unspeakable value to me.

The intelligence, then, we may believe we carry with us. But, says some objector,—it is said a thousand times, printed in the reviews, spoken of in lectures,— How can we think without the brain? Is not the brain the only organ of thought? Professor James, of Harvard, whom I quoted last Sunday, gave a lecture not long ago on two phases of this problem of the other life; and one of them was this, and he — one of the best expert authorities in the world — takes the ground that that objection about the brain is foolish, sophistical, shallow, and utterly worthless. In other words, one of the functions of brain at the present time may be thinking. The "I" back of the brain, or above it, may use it as the organ of thought and the communication of my thoughts to others in my present condition. But that does not prove at all that the "I" ceases to exist, and that there is no thinking done when this brain gets tired and goes back to dust. To resort to a crude illustration, you may attach a dynamo for a time to some particular machine. When you remove that machine, you have not destroyed the dynamo. You may attach it to some other machine, and find that you have there all the old-time power.

The best scientific men of the world have told us that this objection is of no value. Thought is not the product of the brain, in that sense. There accompanies every effort of mind certain molecular movements in the brain. That is

all; but it is not a case of cause and effect; it is only concomitance. Thought coincides with the movements of the brain.

We may carry, then, with us all our magnificently developed powers of thought. We carry love, which is the grandest thing in all the world and the heart of heaven, whether that heaven be here or somewhere else. We carry with us pity and tenderness and sympathy. We carry all those things that we call spiritual, that are of value to us, that constitute our nobler and higher selves. The rest we leave behind, because we have got through with it, and do not want it any more.

And now a word as to possible occupations. The Swedenborgians, you know, following the great seer, tell us that heaven is almost a duplicate of the present life; that almost all the occupations that we carry on here are carried on in some fashion over there. I think it is Milton — and I cannot quote his line with perfect accuracy — who asks the question,—

> "What if earth and heaven be to each other like
> More than on earth is thought?"

I believe, even though I cannot prove it to you just now, that the thinker carries with him his great power to think, and that there are opportunities for ranges of thought there that so surpass all that is conceivable to us to-day as to seem to us almost impossible. The thinker may study,— study the universe, investigate, discover the natural laws of the universe under conditions of which we can hardly dream to-day.

Just a hint, a natural hint. Old ex-President Hill, of Harvard, was one of the most famous mathematicians of the century. I am afraid I should not enjoy his company, should I find him engaged in his favorite occupation on the other side. But this is what he said. Somebody asked him, What are you going to do when you enter the other life?

And his reply was, "There are enough problems, mathematical problems, connected with the arc of a circle, to keep me busy and happy for at least a thousand years."

That was one of the most famous mathematicians of the century. Why should the musician lose the enjoyment of his transcendent power? Why the artist? Why should any of the magnificent souls of the world find themselves without occupation?

And, then, I believe another thing. There are sainted souls, men and women both, in this life, who would not find themselves happy if there were not somebody to help, somebody to whom they could be of service. This condition of mind is illustrated, although humorously, in the expression of the old sainted Calvinist deacon, who had made up his mind he had committed the unpardonable sin, and was sure he would go to hell. Some one asked him what he should do there, and he said he would try to start a prayer-meeting. This dominant wish and will of the soul, I believe, will find scope for its inclination.

And remember how many millions of little children are passing into this country every year. They would need nursing and care and teaching if they stayed here. I believe they will need, and will find, nursing and teaching and care and tenderest love over there. And there are thousands of men and women dying uneducated, undeveloped, soiled, and vicious. Perhaps it is not their own fault. They may have inherited weakness, and been brought up in surroundings that made virtue practically impossible. I believe there will be opportunities for ministering to such as these.

Then, sometimes, when we get very tired, we think that we would like a long while, at least before doing anything again, for rest. As an illustration of this state of mind, I received a letter from Edward Everett Hale during the last winter, in which he said: "When we get to heaven and we have been there a few æons, and had a chance to get rested

a little and to look around us, I hope I shall have a chance to get off with you in some secluded place and have a leisurely talk about some things that I despair of ever getting hold of here."

And so this leisurely rest, this thrilling, throbbing occupation of love and service, this thirst of the discoverer, of the inventor, this genius of the artist, the musician,— all that is noblest and finest and sweetest here, I believe, it is not at all unreasonable for us to suppose will find ample scope and unfolding over yonder. Much of it, most of it, of course, is guess-work now.

We are surrounded with mystery on every hand; and sometimes we get discouraged because we cannot answer all our questions. Get discouraged! Think of it, think a little further, think a little deeper; and this, which is your overwhelming difficulty at times, you will see to be the source and spring of every rational hope. Suppose that we could get through over there in a year or a thousand years; suppose there were no more questions to be asked, nothing more to be done, nowhere else to go. We should pray for a death that would stay death, from sheer ennui.

The only rational ground for belief in the possibility of an immortal life is in the fact that we are surrounded on every hand by alluring mystery, and a mystery that in certain senses may grow and increase as the ages go by. I am in a little valley. I cannot explain how the grass grows or the flowers bud and spring. I could ask a thousand questions that I could not answer; but my difficulty seems to me little and somewhat comprehensible. I climb up the mountains; and the range in the mystery of the unknown grows with every step of ascent.

So I believe that, as we advance, the mystery of the universe, and of our tender, loving Father, God, will increase, instead of diminish, at every step. So I can believe that the hope of an immortal life is a sensible hope, because I know I can study and think and advance forever and ever

and ever, and never approach getting through; for there is no possibility of getting through with the Infinite.

So let us be content with so much as must be mystery, not be discouraged by it,—but regard it as what it is,—the ground of our noblest and most magnificent hopes.

Father, we thank Thee that we have been born, that our feet have touched the lowest rounds of that ladder which, we believe, we may climb until we reach the footstool of Thy throne. Let us be patient with life's sorrows, life's burdens, life's dark hours. Let us clasp close to our hearts the trust in the infinite life and the infinite love. Amen.

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BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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Mothers and Children

BY

REV. ROBERT COLLYER

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

As Dr. Savage, much to his and our regret, will not be allowed by his physicians to occupy his pulpit for the few remaining Sundays of this season, it has been considered best to discontinue the publication of *Messiah Pulpit* until October, when it is expected that Dr. Savage will return with renewed strength to continue his successful work.

By arrangement with the publishers of the *Christian Register*, a copy of that publication will be sent to all subscribers to *Messiah Pulpit* for the next four weeks, thus fulfilling the ordinary subscription term of the *Pulpit*.

With the beginning of a new series of the *Messiah Pulpit* in October, copies will be sent to all present subscribers in the expectation that they wish to continue, unless orders are received to the contrary.

GEO. H. ELLIS,
Publisher.

272 CONGRESS STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

MOTHERS AND CHILDREN.

"They brought young children to him, that he should touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. And he took them in his arms, and blessed them." — LUKE xviii. 15; MARK x. 16.

I THINK it would be the mothers who brought these children to Jesus, that he might bless them, and like to believe it was no mean motive which moved the disciples to bid them keep their distance, because they thought he had other work to do of a far greater moment than this of laying his hands on these little ones who needed no new life to bloom in their ruddy cheeks and pulse through their sturdy limbs; while they could only stare at him in the wide-eyed wonder we have all seen.

Here were the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, waiting for the healing and help which had grown to be such a wonder in their small world. Surely, they had the first claim, while they were also on their way to the Holy City where they dreamed they should sit on thrones, with the world at the feet of their Messiah; and so to permit these mothers and children to hinder their onward march to the coming kingdom was to slip this poor and paltry business in the way of the royalty that was to crown them all with its splendor, so scant was the blessing the good men stood ready to give the mothers and the children that day. For, indeed, if we knew the term they used for "little brats," I imagine we should know what they called them under their breath.

But this was not the first time or the last they were to find they had no true conception of the Master's heart and purpose. Do these children hold the kingdom of God at

bay while I stay to bless them? he seems to answer. Nay, but they help to bring it forth. Let them come, then, and welcome; for all other work I have to do must wait until this is done. These mothers hold the primal right of way with their children; and truly I say unto you, "Whosoever will not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."

And, believing as we do in the pure humanity of this dear Son of God, we may well understand how this love for the children, which prompted him to sweep everything else aside that day, so that he might have room and the time to take them in his arms and bless them, sprang from the nature, first of all, which was one with our own, and, being purely human, rose to the greatness we so truly call divine. It was one condition of the divine errand on which he came from God, as I feel bound to believe, that he should have no home of his own or children to take in his arms; for Lord Bacon says, "The care of posterity may be most in those who have no posterity, and the noblest works and foundations have proceeded from childless men." So we may well believe he was led by the spirit of the Most High to the conclusion which touches his words with such a pathetic and tender meaning: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." Yet we are bound to believe he possessed the self-same instincts and longings that beat through your hearts and mine, and with these the austerity which could say no to these instincts and longings for a home and children, the supreme blessing, the noblest and the sweetest we can win this side heaven, when we stand true to its holy laws. He could not be the head of a home and of the great human family, also, if he would fulfil the holy mission on which he was sent from God,—could not, I say, because he was not. Yet he could not quench the holy fire of this love for the children, but must hold and pour it out from his heart on them, and here, as always, make good the

apostle's word,—"being rich, for our sakes he became poor." He was made in fashion as a man. Therefore, it was a man's heart which beat for them that day, and a man's eyes which shone with the tender and loving light, dim for the moment, it may be, with tears; and a man's arms were held out to take them to his heart for a moment, and bless them.

Nor must we imagine again, that this love which was so purely human, and therefore so divine, would not touch the mothers as it has touched the motherhood of our Christendom through all these ages, so that the more they thought of it afterward, who were of the deeper heart, the more surely they would be aware of the treasure which had come into their life through these children God had given them; while the love which had prompted him to leave all else undone, for the time, so that he might bless them, would help them to take the truth to their hearts that this was to be their loving care also, and, no matter what was waiting, the blessing of their little ones must never wait, because their loving care was caring for the incoming of the kingdom of heaven as this lay waiting in their budding lives, and watching the lights and shadows as they would bend over the opening soul was to have glimpses of an angel in this strange, new world feeling its way toward a life not verified and depending on the mother as it could depend nowhere else in all the world to guide its feet into the ways of peace.

And, again, when this mothers' care would lie heavy on them, and some one of them would begin to change from the angelhood, it may be, to a likeness on which I cannot dwell, as they will sometimes, and in the noblest homes, though the Christ in the good mother incarnate bless them ever so tenderly and sweetly, or the self-same child would reveal now the one spirit and then the other when he grew toward manhood, as if diverse souls were fighting for possession, as your true captain and your pirate fight for possession of the same ship, then, I think, these mothers of the deeper heart,

and true, would hark back to the blessed words they heard that day: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." And then, in the measure of their faith, to conclude the kingdom of heaven is bound to overmaster the kingdom of hell, in the long sure day of the Lord, would be the mother's hope for her boy. Yes, and when such an one was a child and youth no longer, but had grown to be a bearded man, headstrong to go on the way which leads to death, and the mother heard how the child the Holy One had blessed, but a man now, was foaming out his own shame in the wine-shops and other evil places, while she waited by the dying fire until he should reel home, and moaned, "O God, my son, my son," when some one would tell her the woful tale of the street corners that turn down toward hell, and she felt, the poor mother, that death had no drop in the cup beside so bitter as this for her to drain; yes, and when, it may be, the father had given him over to his sin and shame,— there would still be a gleam of hope in the mother's heart. She could never give him up, though the whole world cast him out, and he lay at last a wreck on the shores of time. She would still hold on to the faith that God would save his salvage in her son. She would hold in her heart the promissory note he had given her, who held the little one in his arms, her lamb, so long ago now, and said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven," and present it when the time came for the insurance to be made good. It must be a long way now over which he must pass before he came to himself and his rest,— a long way; but he would come some time toward the portals of the Holy City of God, and, if she might be so blessed, she would stay outside until he came. For what would heaven be to her mother's heart without her boy?

Yes, and she would know him, poor fellow, in ten thousand, and ten thousand more, forlorn as he was, and lost; and maybe he would cry out, when he saw her waiting there: "O mother, do you think I may come in? I am so sick and tired of my sin." So such a mother would hope against all

human hope that he who had held her little child in his arms and blessed him would be sure to remember what he had said about these who were of the kingdom of heaven; while she would remember, also, how he said once, "Which of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one, doth not leave the ninety-and-nine and go after that which was lost until he finds it, and bringeth it home on his shoulders, rejoicing?" "He must have meant my lamb," she would say; for, when we break away from the sweet fold of the home and bruise the mother's heart to breaking, she always harks back to the little one she held in her arms, her lamb.

Therefore, it is by no mere chance, again, that we have to notice in the great pictures the ideals of this incident, how true they are to the truth I would touch, when the mothers come to the front with the children, because this is the mother's business; while the fathers, who are present, would prevent them coming or bid them away. It is all too soon or too late, the men said; but not so said the mothers, or he who came to show us not alone the fatherhood of God, but the motherhood also, and saw an angel in each little child. "It is not too soon or too late," he said, who knew what was in the children as he knew what was in man; while the choice wisdom of the ages is at one here with his holy insight.

When a mother said once to a wise old minister, "When shall I begin, sir, to train up my four-year-old boy in the way he should go?" he answered, "If you have not begun to train him already, you have lost four years." And one good mother, the sainted George Herbert says, is worth a hundred teachers. So Izaak Walton, speaking of Herbert's own mother, said, "She did train her children with such a sweet compliance as did greatly incline them to prefer her company to any other they could find, when they had gone beyond her governing." "I should have been an atheist," John Randolph used to say, "but for my mother, who, when I was a child, would talk to me about God, our Father, when

I would say my prayers by her knee." And John Quincy Adams said once to a school of girls in Boston, when he was far on in life, "The best there is in me I owe to my mother."

So the Arabs say a fig-tree looking on a fig-tree becometh fruitful; and I would say a little child, looking on a good mother's face, is changed into the same image as by the spirit of the Lord. It is told of a great German painter that in all his noblest pictures you are sure to find the face of his mother, and you may be sure it was because she was to his heart's love the match and marrow of the choicest saints in the calendar. And in the last letter Dr. Johnson wrote to his mother, when she was about ninety years of age, he says, "Dear honored mother, you have been the best mother and, as I think, the best woman in all the world to me"; and what nobler tribute could any mother take with her than this from such a son?

So the mothers were justified when they felt it was none too soon, and took care it should not be too late, for the children to receive this supreme blessing and benediction of their life that day. Now was the accepted time; and his heart was one with theirs when he took the little ones in his arms, and elected that all he had to do besides must wait, that he might bless them.

And now may I note again that, while the true mother nurses the child for all goodness, and through these first years is the supreme factor in the budding life, there is only one way to do this, so that our own children shall not miss the benediction these mothers sought that day from the dear son of God; and this way lies not so much in the mother's saying or even in her doing, but in her being what she would have her child to be.

For I noticed last summer in a picture, by one of the great masters, of the Madonna and her child how the painter had caught this idea of the mother's *being* as the noblest secret in her sweet motherhood. It is a very quiet picture, in which you find it not easy to imagine even

baby talk between them, as the child sits there on her lap like a king on his throne rather than a nursling at the breast. But you see the same wonderful light in the eyes of the mother and her boy, while the eyes are lighted from the same divine soul, and in the form, the color, and the very make, as we say, they are one, so that you do not care to wonder what Mary has been saying to her boy or doing for him, as you stand there entranced by the beauty and salt of truth. The being tells you the whole story; and, while the spell is on you, it is not a picture, but the real presence rather, and you are ready to believe that the boy will nestle toward his mother presently, as when he sat there in the small home in Nazareth. These are company manners assumed for the moment, but they will have done with them, when you go away; and then the foolish things of this world will confound the wise, and the weak things the things that are mighty, because the mother's being is the pledge and foreshining of the Messiah of God.

And Rubens, again, has caught this truth I would tell in the great picture at Antwerp. It is the dead Christ now you look on, where death seems to be in the very substance of the poor torn body, while the mother is there once more; and again the touch of genius and inspiration has made the mother and son one. She is as one dead, also, though she breathes and suffers. The hue of death is the same on her face as on the face of her son. She has been on the cross with him. She will go into the sepulchre with him. She can no more help herself now than he can. She dies with him, and can only rise and return to life again when she hears the Easter morning whisper break the silence, "He is not here: he is risen."

Once more so surely does the mother's heart know this truth that being answers to being, not to saying or to doing, if she indeed be a true mother, that there is no sacrifice she will not make, even when her own life has gone all wrong, and she is what we call a lost woman.

I knew such a mother many years ago, and turned in to help her make such a sacrifice. I could do no more, and should have been shamed all my life if I had tried to do less. She told me her story. She had lost her way very early in her life, and had drifted down to where I had found her, or rather where she found me; for it lay in my ministry then to do what I could for these hapless and almost hopeless estrays from the fold of our good human life. She had ruined her womanhood, but her motherhood was not ruined; and so she wanted to put her little one away to be nursed and tended by some good, wholesome woman in the country. We found such a woman, and then the forlorn mother did all that could be done in so sad a case to save her boy, creeping out into the country in such a disguise of integrity as she could muster, just to look at him in the home; and, when he grew up, she hid herself and her secret together, watching him from the far distance, living in her hell while he lived in his safe and sweet shelter. Lost woman as she was, she had still felt her way to this supreme and most holy secret, that the mother's *being* is the master key to the child's life; and, rather than run the risk of dragging all she owned in the world down to where such a woman dwells, she cut all the strands a mother can sever, and would die and make no sign that would shame the boy or the man, and still shame him for the woe of it when he thought of his dead mother.

Here, then, lies the true reason for this haste of the mothers to win the benediction. It is because the mothers came first, and not the fathers. The fathers came in afterward for help and blessing, but we only come in then as a sort of chorus to the song the mothers sing over the cradle and in the good home life. The true nexus lies between the mother and the children until the time comes when they are little children no longer, and then the rule is given into our hands. Then the father can be a judge without the home jury or many things no true father ought to be if

he would reign and rule to a good and true purpose when his turn comes; but the good mother is all the child needs now, with the blessing of heaven and the Christ on her gentle rule. And then there can be no failure in such a mothering, because it is not to give alone, but to give and take; for she drinks at the fountains of their fresh and abounding life, and, in bringing them to him for blessing, the mother also is blessed.

"Jim," a mother, poorly clad, said to her good man one day, as they stood before a picture of the Holy Family in our gallery in New York,— a picture by Raphael, which seemed to cast a radiance over our whole city,—"Jim, if I had a boy like that in our place, I think I could be a real good woman." And she was right. But Jim would have been right, also, if he had said, A boy like that, little woman, in our place may be past praying for; but you may still strike a fair average, as goodness goes nowadays, by those we have at home.

So do some who hear me want what these mothers wanted away down within the heart of their haste to win the benediction. I would not ask whether you talk to the children about the Father and the blessed Christ in the moments which come only now and then. The true mother, through these first years, is to her children in Christ's stead. She is the way, the truth, and the life to them. And so it is scant use merely to tell them of the way. They must go on it first in your arms, or they may not go at all. No use to talk to them of the truth, if you are not the truth, there may be none they will care to learn, and scant use to speak in those sacred moments of the true and good life, if you are not one with the life you would impart and inspire. No use trying to instil the love of God into their budding hearts, if you do not hold it in your own; for, then, mothers might as well tell a garden plot of the sweetness of moss-roses and clove-pinks, and never put in a slip or a seed. The *being* is the doing, and there is no other way that I

know of open to any mother God has blessed with little children.

A very noble woman of our nation writes in her journal: "I am now the mother of an immortal being. God be merciful to me, a sinner." It is a noble cry, and one of the roots of all nobleness; but I do not think it was quite true to the heart of the truth there and then. I love that deep word of the apostle touching the mother,—"She shall be saved by child-bearing"; and I think this mother might have thanked the giver for his unspeakable gift, and left the "sinner" out in that supreme moment of her life. It was a morbid moment in the life of Margaret, our pearl. She was to be in God's stead to the little child. Therefore, this was the time for the saint to speak, and not the sinner, from a soul so essentially good and true.

When Kepler made his great discovery, he bowed his head, and said, "O God, I do but think thy thoughts after thee." And so the true mother may say, when she holds the children in her arms and gathers them about her knees. She is to think God's thought for them, and be one with him and his Christ to bless them. And, then, another noble woman has well said: "Such a mother's love must have this exceeding glory,— that all through his life it will remain as the assurance to the child that there is such a thing as perfect love in the universe, because he has been cradled in its arms, has learned to trust in it, and to know that, however often and miserably he may fail her, love will never fail for him."

It will be indeed as my thought was just now of the mother waiting outside the blessed heavens until her boy comes who is still her lamb, the poor, ragged black sheep of the wilderness and the thorns. He will feel in his dark heart that she will wait and watch for him there as she waited on the earth.

Still, this is only the shadow of a maybe, while the lambs are in the sweet and safe enfolding of the home. Only the joy, then, is true, and the hope that maketh not ashamed, only

the sunshine of heaven and his blessing who took the little ones in his arms, and said, Of such is the kingdom of heaven, while she holds them in a heart as strong and tender as the wings of the mother-bird are in teaching her nestlings to fly. And when she is taken, while they are left, tenderly and sweetly such children will speak of the good mother who was to them the way, the truth, and the life. They will abide by the altars of the faith she made sacred to them as the hearthstones are where they sit, in their turn, with the children, so that the altar-stones, the hearthstones, and those in the God's-acre will be in close touch each with the other.

And then, if the time shall come when one of the children shall sit far up on the snow-line, waiting for the angel to bid him home, while the mists gather earthward and the heaven of the eternal hope draws near when the earliest years blend with those latest and childhood with the good old age, then the truth I would try to tell of the good mother and mothering will be true to this lovely parable, which may well close my sermon this morning: —

"Mark, the miner, is full fourscore;
And he sits in the sun at his cottage door,
Where from harvest field and pasture ground
Young men and maidens gather round.
For, when so minded, Mark can tell
Their little hamlet's chronicle,—
Where their grandsires used to play,
How their grandames looked on their wedding-day.
Mark, how looked the Lady Rose,
Whose bower of green in the forest grows?
Like my good mother, neighbors dear,
Who has lain so long in the churchyard here.
And, Mark, the bishop of holy rule,
Who burnt the stocks and built the school,—
How looked his grace when the church was new?
Why, he looked like my mother, too.
And, Mark, the prince who checked his train
When the stag went through your father's grain?
Why, neighbors, as I live, his look
The face of my good old mother took.

Loud laughed the peasants with rustic shout.
Why, Mark, thy wits are wearing out.
Thy mother was but a homely dame
With a wrinkled face and a toil-worn frame.
What earthly likeness can she bear
To learned bishop or lady fair
Or noble prince with the kingly air?

"He is right, said one who was passing by
While the stars came out in the evening sky.
That homely face has a place and part
Time cannot wear from the old man's heart,
Nor any winter wither.
For know ye not that the true and good
Belong to the world's great motherhood?
And, however their fortunes on earth may stand,
They all take the look of the promised land.
So learned bishop and lady fair
And noble prince with the kingly air
Were like Mark's good old mother."

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BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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